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Wagner, Richard.
Parsifal; libretto.



[REDACTED]

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Adapted by Hughes Blake

JOHN P. JACKSON'S
ENGLISH VERSION OF THE BOOK OF



PARSIFAL

Mr. B. J. Lang's

PRIVATE PERFORMANCE OF THE MUSIC OF

Wagner's Parsifal

AT BOSTON MUSIC HALL

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 15.

ACT I, FROM 4.30 TO 6.00 O'CLOCK.

ACT II, " 7.30 " 8.30 " "

ACT III, " 8.45 " 10.00 " "

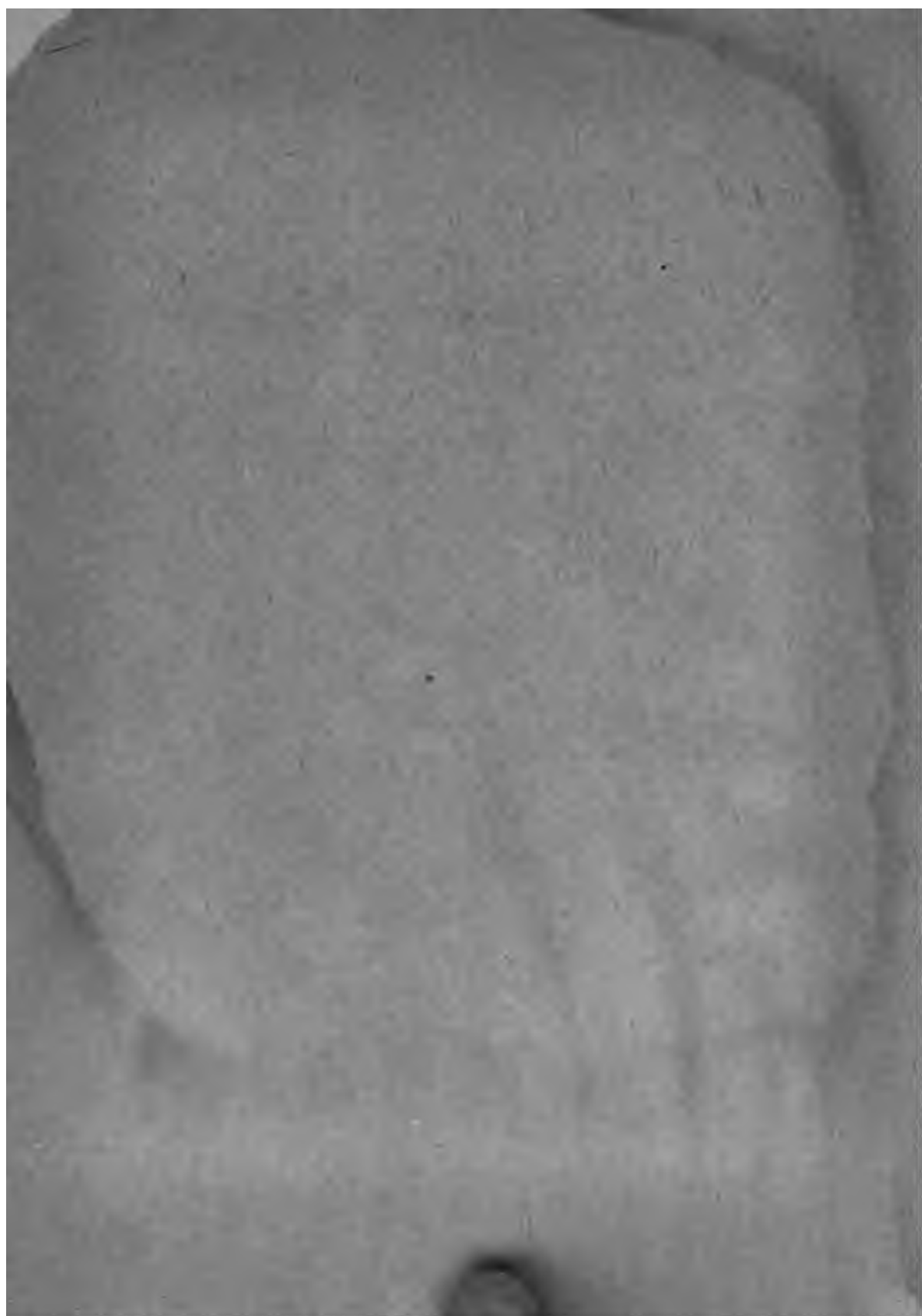
MRS. ANTONIA MIERKE	KUNDE
MRS. ANDREAS DIPPEL	PARSIFAL
MRS. THEODOR REICHMANN	AMEFORTAS
MRS. EMIL FISCHER	GUENEMANZ
MRS. HEINRICH MEYER	KLINGSOR AND TITTEL
MRS. LENA LITTLE	A KNIGHT

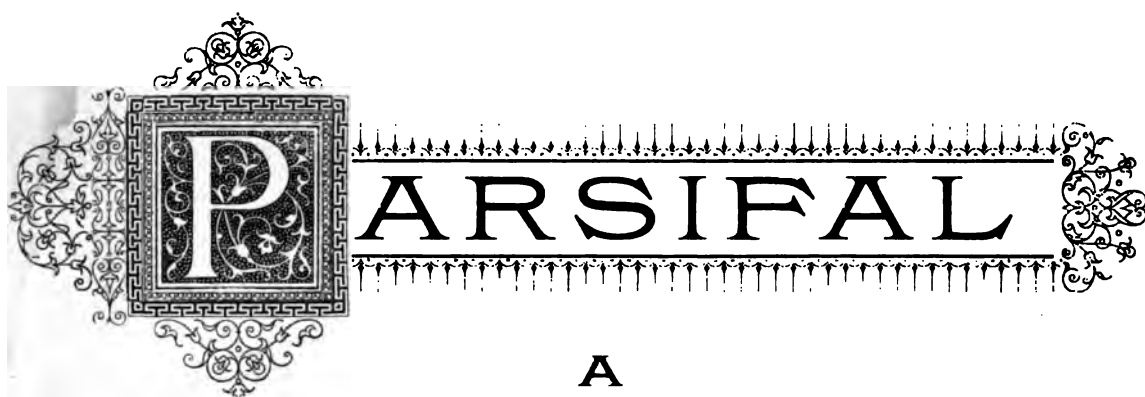
Mrs. J. G. Tupper, Mrs. PATRICK WALKER, Miss GEORGE FRANKLIN, Miss
ELEANOR HARRIS, Miss GEORGE EDWARDS and Miss

HARRIS WHITTEN, - - Flower-Maidens.

Mr. GEORGE J. PARKER and Mr. G. W. WAST, - - Two Esquires.

An unseen Chorus of Solo Singers, large Male and Female Choruses and an
ORCHESTRA OF SEVENTY-FIVE PLAYERS.





A
FESTIVAL MUSIC-DRAMA

—: BY :—

Richard Wagner.



THE ENGLISH VERSION

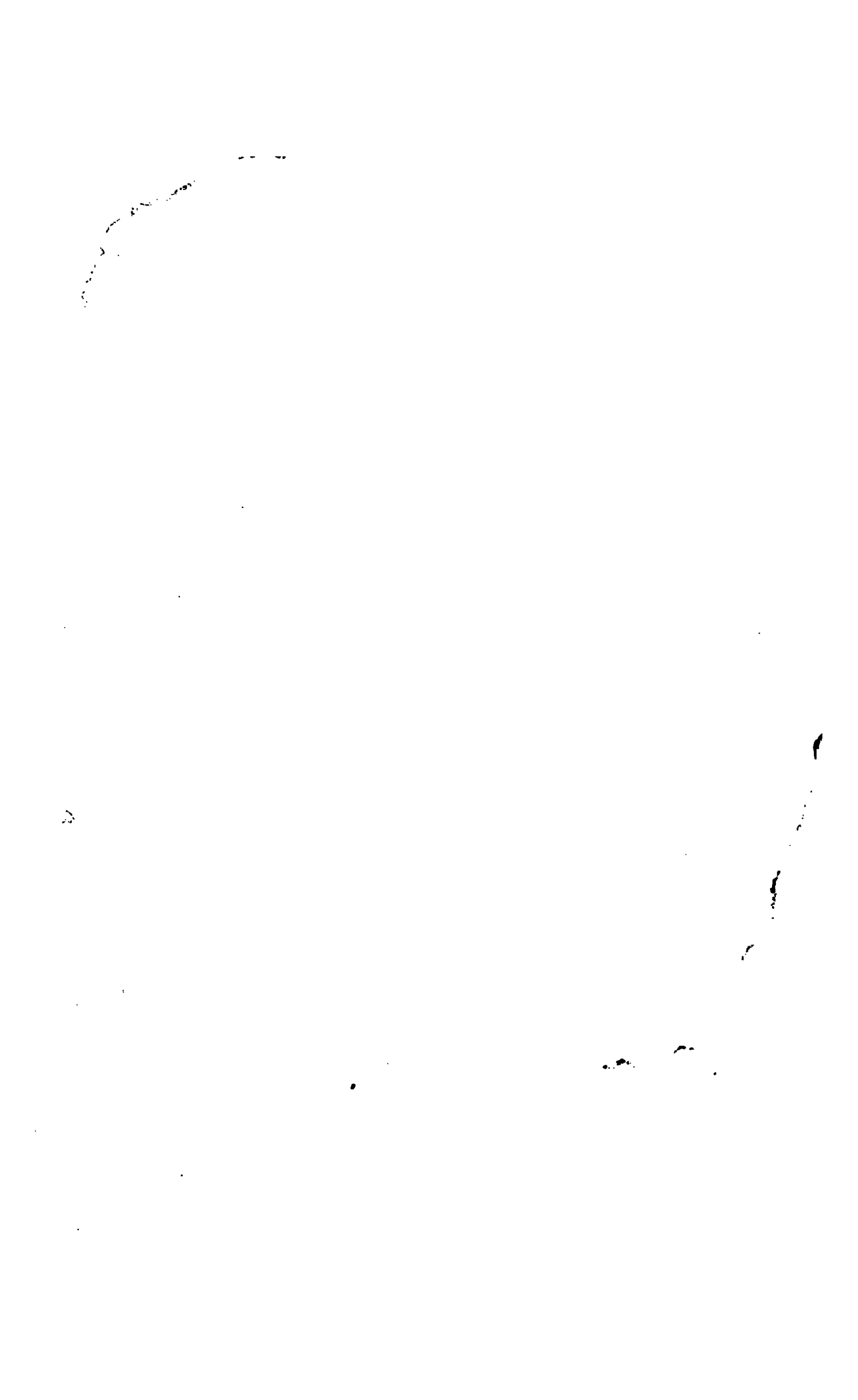
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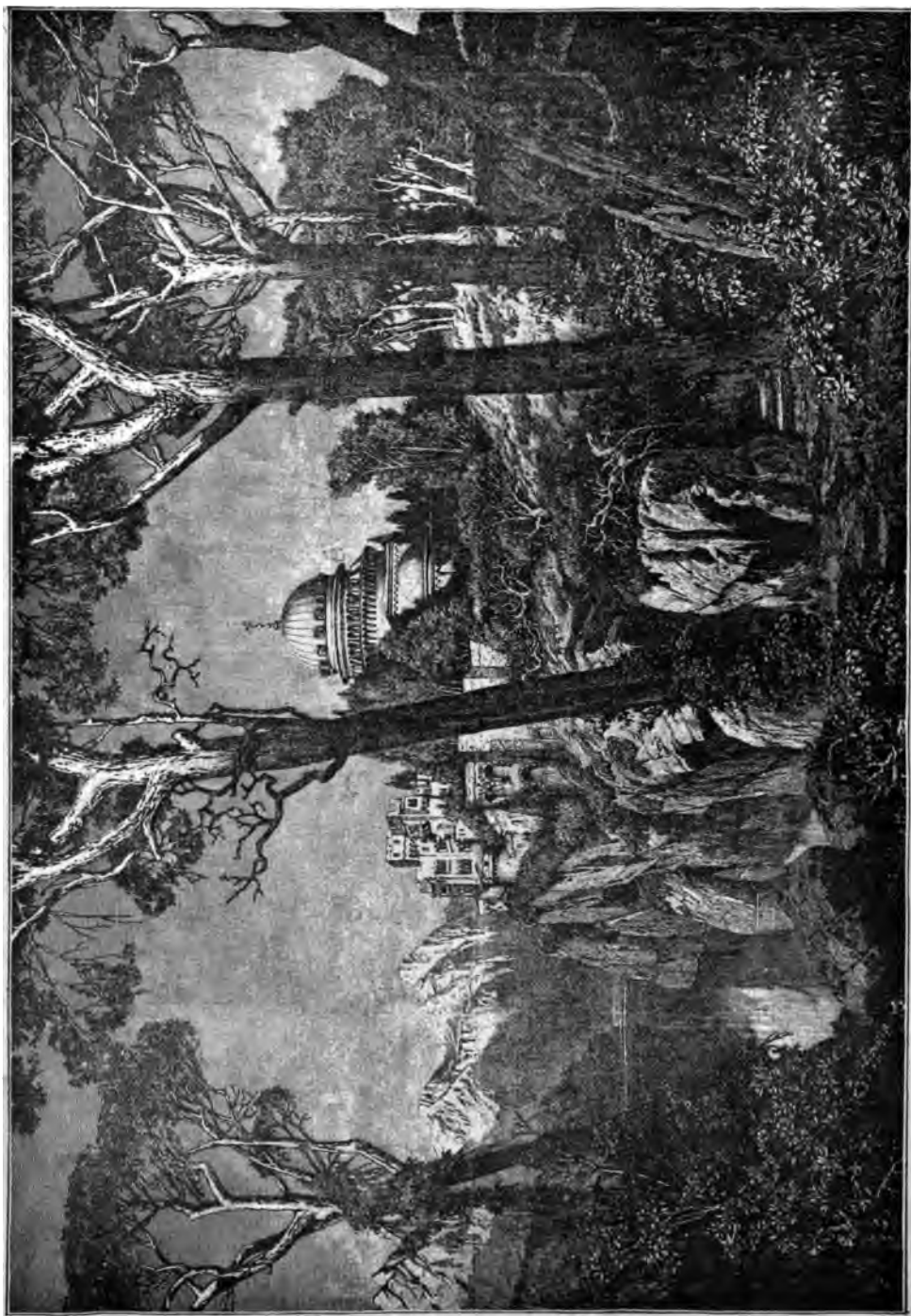
JOHN P. JACKSON,

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EDWARD SCHUBERTH & CO.,
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1891.

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THE CASTLE AND CHURCH OF THE GRAIL.

From a sketch by FRED. KNAB

The Story of the Grail.

*O Grailburg Turrets, Wisdom'd un beholden,
Which common mortals' footsteps never near;
Who, trusting, told ye of their woes untolden,
See Past and Future, Fate and Folly clear.*

*Crown'd forest giants, 'neath broad frondage resting,
Here reign supreme in solitude sublime:
The Warders at the portals wailing, questing,
And deeply troubled, watch the course of time.*

*The em'rald Chalice, consecrate, is gleaming,
In which fell from the Cross the Sacred Blood;
Its hallow'd light, in wondrous glory beaming,
Piercing the walls, with radiance sleeps the flood.*

*Who gazes on its glow, is healed, believing,
Though bore he pain and sorrow e'er so great;
Amforas sorely wounded lies, aye grieving;—
Whence comes He who shall rule his high estate?*

*O Wounds that bleed, and must bleed on forever!
O Yearning's never-ending woe and wail!
'Tis Magic snares the goodly Knights' endeavor,—
Who gives us aid? Who then shall guard the Grail?*

*Where comes such courage high from mortal lowly?
Whose sword and heart are pure as light of day?
The morning flies—the e'ning hours pass slowly—
And yet no Rescuer comes upon the way!*

*When from the rocky clefts in countless number,
The brooded basilisks come forth by night;
And in the sacred Radiance basking, slumber,
Who holds his shield before the Sacred Light?*

*When on the Grail breathes venom'd salamander,
With poison-reeking breath; when from the wave,
Weird nixies rise, with serpent-greedy pander,—
Who'll poise his steel the Sanctity to save?*

*Why trouble ye, O Watchers?—Can ye summon
From valley or from wild waves whom ye would?
A Child is he, in guardianship of Woman,
Whom ye await, the Hero, Pure and Good.*

*He who shall save you: o'er you rule in splendor,
Is still held fast in ban of forest night;
He who your bonds shall break; be your defender,
Must first be laugh'd at, ere he bring the Light.*

Hermann von Lingg.

PARSIFAL is the last of Richard Wagner's music-dramas. It is his swan song. In it he no longer chants the glories of the redemption of Humanity through the intercession and ennobling influence of Woman. The giant brain that had throbbed in poetry and music the intensity of passionate human striving; that had rescued the unhappy Dutchman from eternal doom through the devotion of Senta; that had rescued Tannhäuser from the magic of Venusberg, through the pleading of the saintly Elizabeth; that had given death in bliss to Tristan and Isolde, and had left the supreme legacy of Love to the world through Brunnhilda, found a yet higher theme.

It is a beautiful world that we have to leave, wherein Wagner had taught us to search in femininity for the halo of divinity; to whose rudeness he had preached loveliness and beauty, and bliss and blessing; whose striving he had made godlike in transforming Woman into an angel of redemption, the source of adventure and inspiration and the reward of complete joy. But the storm and stress period has now departed. The charming quest of adventure exemplified in Young Siegfried is finished. The all-consuming passion of the Knight of Careol and dark eyed Erin's Princess has found solution in death. Even Brunnhilda's splendid legacy no longer suffices.

But the end was coming. The blaze of Walhalla was symbolical of the dawn of Christianity. With his last years, when the all-devouring storm was over, when the fervor of manhood had merged with the serene splendor of age, the Poet-Composer turned to the realm of pure Faith, to the attainment of the glory of the Grail, that marvellous medieval symbolism in which is held the belief of millions of humanity of all creeds and all nationalities.

PARSIFAL is intimately connected with the Poet-Composer's earlier work LOHENGRIN. In fact the study of one is a necessity to the understanding of the other—for LOHENGRIN is PARSIFAL's son. Echoes of the marvellous ouverture of the earlier work, that tells of the bringing of the Grail to earth by an angelic host; and of the narrative description of fabled Monsalvat, are heard everywhere in PARSIFAL. What in LOHENGRIN was pictured as the unattainable is in the later work achieved through purity and faith. The Grail is one of

the most beautiful poetic conceptions of the Middle Ages. The legend of it has its roots in the oldest times. The idea lies at its basis that somewhere in the world there existed a place of the purest bliss, where eternal peace reigned, where all wishes and hopes found solution. But during the darkness and days of discontent and doubt, the picture of this Paradise was lost, and only a single jewel remained in memory—a precious stone which, imbued with all the strength of the lost good, afforded its possessor all blessing and bliss.

The early Christian teachers transformed the old legend to a precious jewel gifted with the virtues of healing and redemption, and which they styled the San Greal or Holy Grail. It was the embodiment so to speak, of all that the poets of that era of devotion could express of the sacred in the Christian religion, of the highest and purest attainable by mankind. It was the miraculous chalice of wonderful power, from which, the legends say, Christ drank at the Last Supper, and in which were caught and preserved by Joseph of Arimathea the last drops of the Saviour's blood as He was taken down from the Cross; and which afterwards became that "treasure brought from heaven by angels and guarded by a company of knights in the temple-castle of inaccessible Monsalvat—unapproachable by the profane foot, unattainable to the ordinary eye."

In German mythology Wagner found the inspiration for all his dramatic poems, and from the poetry was evolved their musical completion. The story of *PARSIFAL* was originally told by the German Minnesinger, Wolfram von Eschenbach, in that peculiar contest of singers before Landgrave Hermann, at the Wartburg, about the year 1207. The story of the Wartburger Krieg is contained in the epic poems of *PARSIFAL*, *TITUREL* and *LOHENGRIIN*, the first of which is alone from Wolfram, while the second is supposed to be by Albrecht of Scharffenberg, and the third is from a poet of the Lower Rhine, whose name is not known. Wolfram's poem comprises some of the most beautiful medieval legends in its plan. The traditions of King Arthur and the Round Table, and of the Grail, are by the Minnesinger (following Chrétien de Troyes), blended into a beautiful mystical whole. The splendor of worldly chivalry, as represented by King Arthur, is transformed into the glory of a kingdom of spiritual knighthood, representing the highest and purest chivalric ideals of medieval poets.

The original form of the legend, as given by Wolfram, is undoubtedly the Arthurian, which was treated by the Welsh bards as early as

the sixth and seventh centuries. In 1170 Chrétien de Troyes sang of the search of the Holy Grail. With him an ideal structure rises from the legendary foundation of the Welsh Mabinogion. Parsifal is Peredur ennobled under the influence of Christianity. Then the legend was adopted by Wolfram. The poets of the Middle Ages endeavored in every possible way to describe in the most glowing colors the homes of their heroes; they gathered poetic and legendary flowers wherewith to crown them; and they placed them at last with the knightly throng of Templars, whom they transferred to Monsalvat. They created a new Zion, and the Grail was the symbol almost of divinity.

Titirel was the first ruler of the kingdom of the Grail which is placed by Wagner in inaccessible mountainous regions of Gothic Spain. There he "builded a shrine for the Holy Things" that had been placed in his hands by angels—the Chalice or the "Gral" and the Sacred Lance with which Longinus had pierced the body of Christ. The castle was built upon a rock inaccessible to ordinary mortals, and was called Monsalvat, the hill of salvation. There Titirel gathered together the Templar defenders of the San Greal. In the center of the castle there was a wonderful temple of fabulous glories. It was circular in form, and had seventy-two chapels or choirs, with thirty-six turrets. The vaulted roofs of the choirs were of blue sapphire and in the center was a sheet of costly emeralds with the Lamb and Cross emblazoned in gold. All the altar pieces were likewise of sapphire, emblematic of the Atonement of Sin, while rare and costly gems were everywhere scattered profusely around.

In the center of the principal dome of this superb temple, were the sun and the moon, the one in sparkling diamonds, the other in topazes. The windows were of crystal, beryls, and other precious stones, on which were painted, in the most exquisite colors, designs of rarest beauty. The turrets were of gold, the summit of the central dome was formed by a single carbuncle, which shone amid the darkness of the night, to light the way for the weary pilgrim. In the center of the principal dome stood another temple, in miniature, still more brilliant and beautiful; and in this the Holy Grail itself was deposited. Every Friday a white dove brought down the Host from heaven and placed it in the holy vessel. To be its guardian was the highest honor to which mankind could aspire, and could only be obtained by the pure in heart and head, by the noblest and loftiest natures, wise and brave, sober and temperate, chaste

and gentle, devoted to the service of God and the protection of the helpless and oppressed. Around this magic temple lay a wood where none could penetrate save the pure in heart and deed. Centuries passed on and still the temple stood in its pristine splendor, watched and defended by its faithful guardians till, at length, the increasing wickedness of the western world rendering it unworthy of so sacred a deposit, it was borne back by angels to some unknown region in the East.

Titurel ruled four hundred years over the Grail kingdom ere he was called to his eternal rest. He was succeeded by his son Frimutelle, who, however, fell from grace. He, in his turn, was succeeded by Amfortas, who had fallen from his high estate and had been wounded in an encounter with the magician Klingsor. The latter had himself once been a Knight of the Grail, but he had been expelled from the order for his sins. He had then built a castle near to Monsalvat and had filled it with beautiful maidens to allure the Knights. Amfortas had fallen to the wiles of Kundry (Orgeleuse). Klingsor had obtained possession of the Sacred Spear, and hoped in time to possess himself of the Grail. Amfortas, however, was still kept in life by being permitted to look upon the radiance of the Grail. But his wound would not heal; yet the prophesy was that there should come to the Grailburg in good time a pure, youthful knight, who after passing triumphantly through temptation and mockery, should bring him healing and redemption by touching his wound with the Sacred Lance, but should succeed him as ruler of the Grail realm.

Parsifal, a descendant of Titurel, the son of Gamuret and Herzeleide, is the pure knight who is chosen for the work of redemption. He is called the "guileless fool," which Wagner derives from the Arabic fal-parsi. He is the Peredur of the Mabinogion, the Parcival de Gallois of Chrétien de Troyes and the Parzival of Wolfram.—His adventures are recorded by Wagner in his poem in sufficient measure to give the student of the music-drama the full appreciation of his mission. Wagner takes his hero out of the circle of the Arthurian legends, keeps him in absolute knightly purity, unlike either Chrétien or Wolfram; making of him a Siegfried ennobled, whose striving is for the attainment of godliness, through conflicts with temptation and evil, until he can stand in the presence of the most glorious symbol of Faith:—

*"The phantom of a Cup that comes and goes—
The Cup, the Cup itself, from which Our Lord
Drank at the last sad supper with his own."*

The poem of *PARSIFAL* was completed by Wagner in the summer of 1877, a year after the first Nibelung Festival Performances at Bayreuth. On the 16th of September of that year, he read it before the delegates from the numerous Wagner Societies that had then been established all over Germany. "Reverently we sat that afternoon" says Prof. Tappert, "in Villa Wahnfried. It was an hour that can never be forgotten. When the Master came to the third act, just to the place where the coffin with Titurel's corpse is borne into the hall by the Knights of the Grail, the sun was sinking behind the trees in the Hof Garden. His last beams, tremblingly, like greeting spirits, came silently into the room and glorified the scene, the waves of light finally resting like a halo around the head of the composer." Wagner finished the musical composition of the work at Palermo, and in July and August 1882, sixteen performances of the work were given at Bayreuth. On February 13, of the following year the great composer died at Venice.

But the germ of the Parsifal music-drama was born in Wagner's mind much earlier than 1877. The first portions were the "Abendmahl" scene and the "Good Friday Magic." The latter is thought to date from the year 1857. Prof. Tappert says: "Wagner told me (in 1877) that in the fifties when in Zurich he took possession on a Good Friday of a charming new house, and that inspired by the beautiful spring weather he wrote out the sketch that very day of the Good Friday music. From a letter of his to Tichatschek dated Zurich, February 9, 1857, I believe I am justified in coming to the conclusion that 1857 is the date to be adopted. The passage in his letter reads: 'At Easter I shall take possession of a very charming little villa near Zurich, with a pretty garden, in a glorious position, just like I have so long desired. There I shall soon get settled and begin work in earnest'."

In his dramatic sketch of *JESUS OF NAZARETH*, Wagner says: Love is the law of life for all created things. But man interfered in the divine law; he made restrictions in order to attain an end outside of human nature—that is, to gain power, rulership and for the protection of property. The greatest glory of love is in creation, then in doing good to others, then in death, that is, the self-sacrifice in favor of the maintenance and enrichment of the whole life, which leaves its legacy of traditions and personality on earth and lives again in the ages to come. The loveless remain in egotism and find in death complete annihilation. Christ, he says, taught the beautiful

doctrine of the universality of love, a love which passes beyond the bounds of family and of race patriotism and stretches out in infinite mercy in the salvation of the whole human race. This is the greatest glory of Love, which finds in Christ its most splendid realization.

Wagner gave up the idea of making a music-drama of Christ's life, but to the thoughts born at the time he wrote his dramatic sketch he frequently turned, especially in later life. After the period of stress and storm had passed, he gradually came to look upon Christianity in its beautiful symbolism with clear vision, and in his last work he really gives devotional homage to the splendor of Christ's teachings on earth, as found in the mysterious symbol of the Holy Grail, in the search for which, for perfect purity, medieval chivalry constantly strove. Could anyone but one whose heart was filled with the essence of true Christianity have written the splendid lines of the Good Friday scene?

Wagner tried to teach in all his works the everlasting truth of Atonement through Love, first the redemption of the individual through the blessedness of Purity, and last the redemption of the whole world through "the curse-atoning love of Divine Grace," gained through penitence and faith. Brunnhilda's world-redeeming Love no longer satisfied the heart. "A great necessity of our times it is," wrote Wagner after the completion of *PARSIFAL*, "that we should be directed again to the Ideal, so that we may prepare the heart for the reception of the deepest and most earnest religious feelings."

Professor Tappert among his Wagnerian literary treasures gives a strikingly interesting letter which the Composer addressed to the *Schlesische Volkszeitung* in the year 1877, at the time when the controversy about "The Ring" was raging in Germany. In it he spoke of his several creations, from *THE FLYING DUTCHMAN* to *PARSIFAL*, explaining their significance from the standpoint of Love. He said: "In *THE FLYING DUTCHMAN* it is the devotion and faithfulness of the Woman ready to die for the one she loves, but whose soul has fallen under the love-curse.

"In *TANNHÄUSER* it is Divine Grace gained through the intercession of a Pure Woman, who renounces all and dies for the one she loves, and appears as the Redemptrix of unhappy human nature wavering between the curse of sensuality (Venus) and longing toward the highest Idealism of Love.

"In *LOHENGRIIN* it is terrestrial Love, clinging to sensuality and demanding recognition, that is wrecked on the elevated Idealism of a superhuman Love that yearningly inclines earthward.

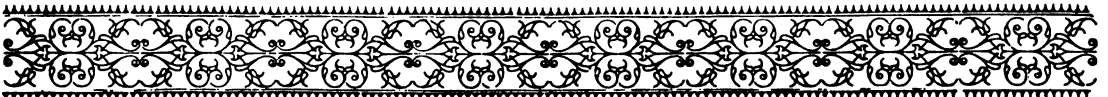
"Through *TRISTAN AND ISOLDE* there presses a single, all-overpowering, ecstatic longing of two loving human souls, carrying them towards a pure ideal love-realm—which, however, is found only in the Death, that is the atonement for their destructive delusion—the realization of that Ideal within the confines of life on this side.

"In *THE RING OF THE NIBELUNGS* the Love-curse which accompanied the theft of the symbol of sensuality and all sensual desiring—the Rhinegold—rests on all portions of the tragedy; it demands one victim after another, destroying through guilt and in atonement a whole world, till finally the curse of desire is broken in the heart of Brunnhilda, who dying, gives the Ring—the gold—back to the primitive elements, and leaves behind her the gospel of curse-freed, world-redeeming Love, which, from compassion coming to consciousness through fearfullest frenzy and sorrow she left as her legacy of the Ideal to the world.

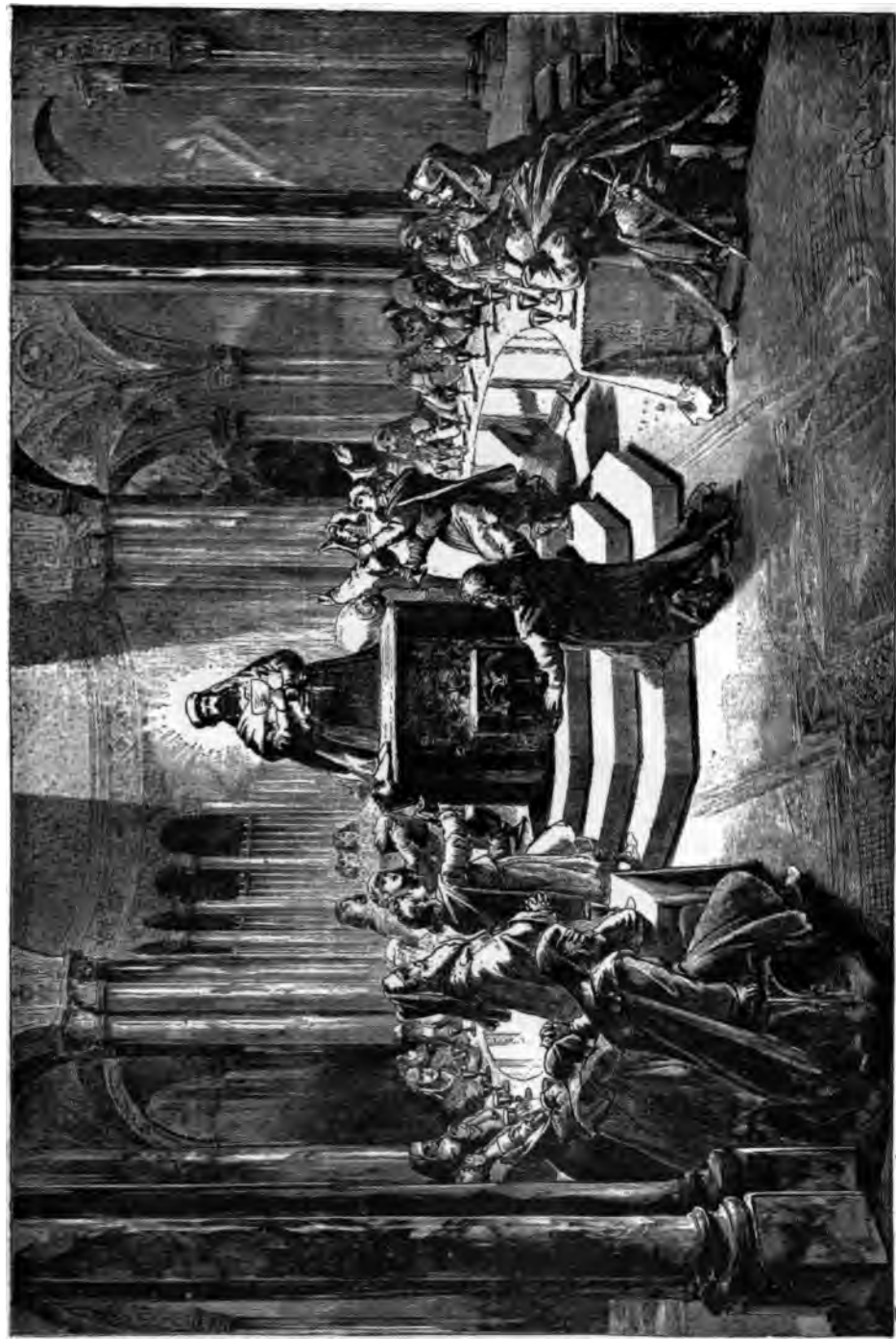
"In *PARSIFAL* the sufferings of the Redeemer himself are the saving power and at the same time the incorporation of that Ideal which the love-curse has taken from the saintly ones of the Grail Temple. *PARSIFAL* has attained to the recognition of the sacrificial wounds of Christ, and preserving this recognition in his love of the being of his own purity, rescues the fatal spear that pierced the Saviour's side from the power of heathendom, and in conscious, compassionate sympathy heals with it the ever-bleeding wound caused by the love-guiltiness of the deluded Grail King."

Parsifal was written with the events in the life of Christ in the Poet-Composer's mind. When it was given at Bayreuth, a critic said: "So deeply reverent was the spirit of all the performers that the remark was made by many who were present that the scene of the first act was the most impressive religious service they had ever attended." Grasp but the spirit of Wagner's poem, and the music will become clear as the light of the Grail. The composer and his work must be approached in devotional spirit, for "who loves him not can never understand him; who does not feel him will never grasp his work."

*"Wer Ihn nicht liebte wird Ihn nicht versteh'n,
Wer Ihn nicht fühlt der wird Ihn nie begreifen!"*







PARSIFAL, ACT I.—THE VISION OF THE GRAIL.

PARSIFAL.

MUSIC AND WORDS BY RICHARD WAGNER.

THE ENGLISH VERSION OF THE POEM BY JOHN P. JACKSON.

PERSONS.

AMFORTAS,	GURNEMANZ,	KLINGSOR,
TITUREL,	PARSIFAL,	KUNDRY.
Knights of the Grail and Esquires.		Klingsor's Enchantresses.

Act 1.—The Realm of the Grail.

SCENE —*In the Realm and in the Castle of the Warders of the Grail—"Monsalvat." The place is in character like the northern mountains of Gothic Spain. Afterwards, in KLINGSOR'S Magic Castle, on the southern slope of the same mountain range, assumed to face Arabian Spain. The dress of the Knights of the Grail and their ESQUIRES resembles that of the Knights Templars: white tunic and mantle, but instead of the red cross a hovering dove is embroidered upon scutcheon and mantle.*

Scene 1.—A forest, shadowy and solemn; but not gloomy.

Rocky ground. A glade in the middle. To the left is rising ground, where the way to the Castle of the Grail is assumed. In the centre, at the back, the ground sinks toward a low-lying lake, surrounded by forest. Daybreak. GURNEMANZ, a yet vigorous knight, and two ESQUIRES of tender years, are lying asleep under a tree. From the left, as if coming from the Castle of the Grail, is heard the solemn morning trumpet call.

GURNEMANZ.

(awaking and shaking the ESQUIRES.)
Hey! Ho! Woodwarders ye!
Sleep-warders together!

Awake at least with the morning!

The two ESQUIRES spring up, and immediately sink upon their knees, ashamed.

Hear ye the call? Give thanks to God—
That ye in grace are held to hear it!

He, too, sinks on his knees; together, they offer their morning prayer. When the trumpets cease they rise.

Arise, ye striplings! See to the bath!
Time 'tis the Monarch be awaited!
The heralds who precede his couch
I see already on the way!

(Two KNIGHTS enter as if coming from the Castle.)

All hail! How fares our Lord to-day?

He craves full early for the bath:—

The healing herbs Gawaine

With skill and courage gainèd hath,—

I ween me, have well eased his pain?

THE FIRST KNIGHT.

That weenest thou, well wotting all!

With greater pains than before

Returned the affliction sore;

Sleepless, oppressed for breath,

He bade us hasten him the bath.

GURNEMANZ.

(letting his head drop sorrowfully.)

Fools are we, relief for him awaiting,

When healing only serves him!—

For every herb, for every potion search,

And hunt wide through the world;—

Yet here—ONE only

ONE—can help him!

FIRST KNIGHT.

Him prithee name!

GURNEMANZ *(evasively.)*

See to the bath!

(*The ESQUIRES turning towards the background.*)

FIRST ESQ.: See there, the wild one hitherward rides.

SECOND ESQ.: Hei! How madly

The mane of the devil's mare flutters!

FIRST ESQ.: Aye, Kundry 'tis!

SECOND ESQ.: And brings us weighty tidings?

FIRST ESQ.: The mare is staggering.

SECOND ESQ.: Did she come through the air?

FIRST ESQ.: Now low she sweeps o'er the ground.

SECOND ESQ.: With her mane she brushes the moor.

FIRST ESQ.: The wild one has swung to the earth.

KUNDRY *rushes in, almost reeling. Wildered garb, fastened high; a girdle of snake-skin hanging low down; black hair, in loose plaits, fluttering wildly; deep brown, reddish complexion; piercing black eyes, at times wild and blazing, again glassy and fixed. She hastens to GURNEMANZ, and presses upon him a small crystal phial.*

KUNDRY.

Here, take it!—Balsam!

GURNEMANZ.

Say, whence bringest the balm?

KUNDRY.

Much further hence than thy thought can reach:

Should the balsam fail,

Arabia blest

Bears nought that can bring him ease.—

Ask no further!—I am weary!

(*She casts herself upon the ground.*)

A train of ESQUIRES and KNIGHTS, bearing and escorting the litter on which AMFORTAS rests, arrives. GURNEMANZ has turned away from KUNDRY and towards the new-comers.

GURNEMANZ.

(*while the procession is entering the scene.*)

'Tis he! How tenderly they bear him!

Alas! How grievous is the story,—

In his excelling manhood's glory,

The all-victorious race's lord,

To such affliction sore a slave.

(*To the ESQUIRES.*)

Be heedful!—Hark, the Monarch moans!

(*They halt and set down the litter.*)

AMFORTAS.

(*raising himself up slightly.*)

'Tis well!—Have thanks!—Here rest awhile.—

Night's mad'ning tortures borne,

Now fairest forest morn!—

In the hallowed mere

The waves my pain shall lighten;

Woe sinks in fear:

The hideous night shall brighten!—

Gawaine!

FIRST KNIGHT.

Lord,—Gawaine linger'd not:

For, when, the precious herb

He'd found in spirit chasten'd

Alas! thy hopes betray'd,

He on another search unwearied hastened.

AMFORTAS.

Unbidden?—May he atonement proffer!

The Grail's behests thus sets at naught!

O woe to him, if he should suffer,—

If he in Klingsor's snares be caught!

Our hests ne'er more be violated:—

For him I hope—the long-awaited—

“Through pity guided”——

Was't not so?

GURNEMANZ.

So saidest thou it was.

AMFORTAS.

“A fool yet pure”——

Methinks that I could name him,

Could I as Death proclaim him!

GURNEMANZ.

But ere he come—to this accord a trial!

(*He hands him a phial.*)

AMFORTAS

Whence this mysterious phial?

GURNEMANZ.

'Twas brought to us from Araby, the blest.

AMFORTAS.

Who was it brought it?

GURNEMANZ.

'Twas she—the wilder'd one—

Up Kundry! Come! (*She refuses.*)

AMFORTAS.

Thou, Kundry?

Once more have I to thank thee.

Thou restless, shyest maid—

So be it!

The balsam I forsooth will try,

If but in thanks for thy devotion!

KUNDRY.

(*lying uneasily on the ground.*)

No thanks!—Ha, ha! How can it help thee?

No thanks!—Go—go!—Thy bath!

AMFORTAS *gives the signal to proceed. The procession moves away toward the deeper background, GURNEMANZ looking after it sadly, KUNDRY still lying upon the ground. The ESQUIRES go to and fro.*

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Hey! Thou there!—

Why liest there like a grovelling brute?

KUNDRY.

Are not brutes held here then sacred?

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Aye—but if sacred thou?—

That know we not all for sure.

FOURTH ESQUIRE.

With her enchanted potions, I fear me,
She'll bring the Master down to destruction.

GURNEMANZ.

Hm! Hath she done harm to you?—

When all were sore perplex'd,—

To battling Templars, in distant ridings

How to carry good tidings?

And scarce we knew where they were?—

Ere ye could think, saw ye not her—

Speed straight away—then back came again,

The message guarding, with might and main?

Ye feed her not! What would ye do?

Nought in common hath she with you!

But when urgent aid in danger ye need,

To succor bring to you doth she not speed?

Of you ne'er asking thanks as her meed:

Methinks, if so she harm you—

Ye need not so much alarm you.

THIRD ESQUIRE.

She hates us all—

See how maliciously at us she looks!

FOURTH ESQUIRE.

She's a pagan wretch—a sorceress!

GURNEMANZ.

Aye, under some curse perhaps she rests:

Here lives, may be

Renewed, that she

Atone for life of guilt once liven,

That yet remains all-unforgiven.

Does she do penance thus demurely,

Our knightly weal assisting surely,

Good does she then, not seeking pelf,—

Serves us well, and helps herself.

THIRD ESQUIRE.

But was it not her sinfulness,

That brought us oft our sore distress.

GURNEMANZ.

Aye, when she oft remained too long away,

Then came misfortune, many a day:

Full long I've known her well,

Much longer knows her Titirel:

When he our castle stronghold builded,

He found her sleeping in the scrub—

All stiff, senseless, as dead.

So, too, I all so lately found her,

Just when misfortune dire was wrought;

By th' miscreant o'er the mountain yonder

So shamefully upon us brought.

(To KUNDRY.)

Hey! Thou! Hear me and say—

Where gone hadst thou from us away,

When our good Master's Spear was lost?—

(KUNDRY is silent.)

Why wert thou not here to help us then?

KUNDRY.

I never help.

FOURTH KNIGHT.

Dost hear her words?

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Is she so true, so without fear;

So send her forth for the missing Spear!

GURNEMANZ.

(gloomily.)

That is quite different:—Tis to all denied.

(deeply moved.)

O, Wounding-Wonderfullest,

Holiest Spear!

I saw thee hurl'd

By the unholiest hand!

(as if lost in thought.)

With it well-arm'd, Amfortas, well-loved Master—

What could thy arm have hinder'd

From warding off disaster?—

Full near the bourg, 'twas there the Master fell,

A victim to the fair enchantress' spell—

And in her arms he lay as drunken,

The Lance beside him sunken;—

A deathly cry!—I rush'd anigh.—

Saw Klingsor, laughing disappear,

Bearing away the sacred Spear.

The King retreating, battling well, I guarded;

But in his side a grievous wound he warded,—

The wound it is, that nevermore will close.

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Didst know this Klingsor?

GURNEMANZ.

(To the FIRST and SECOND ESQUIRES, who are
coming from the lake.)

How fares the King?

SECOND ESQUIRE.

The bath refresh'd him!

FIRST ESQUIRE.

The balsam lull'd the pain.

GURNEMANZ.

(after a long silence.)

The wound it is—that nevermore will close.

THIRD ESQUIRE.

But furthermore say—we'd like to know—

Didst know this Klingsor—how came it so?

(The THIRD and FOURTH ESQUIRES have seated
themselves at GURNEMANZ's feet. The two other
ESQUIRES join them.)

GURNEMANZ.

Titirel, our pious Lord,
Knew him full well :—
For once, when angry foes, with subtle might,
Press'd round, the realm of faith harassing ;
Came down to him, in holy, earnest night,
An angel host, in light surpassing :—
The sacred Chalice with them sweetly bearing,—
Whereout He drank, the sad Last Supper sharing ;
Which at the Cross received the precious tide :
As well the Lance that pierc'd the Sufferer's side ;—
These wondrous Tokens, worth beyond compare,
They gave unto our gracious Monarch's care :

A Shrine he builded for the Holy Things. —

Those who to serve it have been bidden,
On paths to sinners ever hidden,
Know well that only those on
Whom stain rests not are chosen
As Templars, to salvation's work empower'd,
And by the Grail with marvell'd strength endower'd.

Thus 'twas to him, of whom ye speak, denied,—
Klingsor—who hard to gain the honor tried ;
Yonside the mountain is his dwelling found ;
Beyond it lies the rankest pagan ground :
Unknown to me what sin his soul had tainted,
He strove in vain to win the title sainted.

Unable in himself his sinful lust to deaden,
Upon himself laid impious hand ;—

When 'fore the Grail he dared to stand,
Contemptuously its Warder from him spurned !

Fill'd with dumb raging Klingsor's bosom burn'd,
And from his damnable act he sought
How spells satanic might be wrought.—
And these straight found :

In yonder wastes he magic bowers created,
Where winsome, devilish women wander'd ;
There, for the Grail's good serviteurs awaited ;
To hellish lust and evil pander'd :
Full many were lured with wiles infernal
Who now are held in bonds eternal. —

Then Titirel, by weight of years o'erpower'd,
His son with realm and rulership endower'd.

Amfortas let it there not rest,
But sought to end this magic pest ;—
Ye know well now how matters stand—
The Spear is held in Klingsor's hand :—
If thus on sainted ones (with it) he works disaster,
Of the Grail itself he weens he'll soon be master.
(*Kundry, in violent unrest, has several times turned quickly round.*)

FOURTH ESQUIRE.

Before all else—the Lance redeemed from shame !

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Ha! Who could that—what glory he could claim!

GURNEMANZ.

(*after a silence.*)

Before the orphan'd sanctuary,
In fervent prayer once lay Amfortas,
A saving sign from heaven imploring :—
In blessed radiance from the Grail outstreaming,
A haloed semblance broke,
That clearly to him spoke, [ing.
Through plainly pictur'd symbols brightly gleam—
“Through pity guided—
A fool yet pure—
Through him comes
Redemption sure!”

(*The FOUR ESQUIRES repeat the lines, deeply moved.
From the lake is heard the cries and shouts of*)

KNIGHTS AND ESQUIRES.

Woe! Woe! Hoho!

Up! Who is the culprit?

GURNEMANZ and the four ESQUIRES start up terrified.
*A wild swan with broken wing, flutters towards
them from the lake; it has been wounded and
strives to keep up his flight but gradually
sinks dying to the ground.*

The Shooting of the Swan.

GURNEMANZ: What is it?

FIRST ESQ.: There!

SECOND ESQ.: Here!—A swan!

THIRD ESQ.: A poor wild swan!

FOURTH ESQ.: And sorely wounded.

OTHER ESQUIRES: (*entering*) Woe! Horror! Woe!

GURNEMANZ: Who shot the swan?

THIRD ESQUIRE.

The King beheld it as a happy omen,
When o'er the mere slowly circled the swan.

Then sped an arrow. —

OTHER ESQUIRES.

(*leading in PARSIFAL.*)

'Tis he! The wretch! Here the weapon!
Here the arrow, just like his own.

GURNEMANZ (*to PARSIFAL.*)

Didst thou the gentle swan so murder?

PARSIFAL.

In truth! My arrow winged well its flight.

GURNEMANZ.

Such deed couldst do?
And hast thou no fear for thy act?

THE ESQUIRES.

Punish the culprit!

GURNEMANZ.

All-audacious deed!—

And thou couldst murder? Here, in the sacred forest,
Whose hallowed peace was over thee spread?
The woodland dwellers, friendly were and tame,
Fondly approached thee; were not afraid?
From the branches, what sang all the birds to thee?

How harm'd thee the faithful swan?—
To search for his mate he wing'd his high path,
With her to circle over the mere;—
That he so guarded, hallowing the bath!
Thou marvelledst not; didst lust alone
To speed thy arrow forth from the bow?
To us so revered—what was he to thee?
Here—behold—here struck thy dart!—

The blood not yet stiff, all powerless his pinions!
The snow-white plumage darkly besplash'd!—
Aye, broken the eye: seest thou its glance?
Art conscious of thy grievous sin?

PARSIFAL has listened with increasing distress; he breaks his bow and casts the arrows far from him.

Say, boy, dost know how heinous is thy crime?
—How couldst thou have done such thing?

(PARSIFAL draws his hand across his eyes.)

PARSIFAL: I knew not the wrong.

GURNEMANZ: Where is thy home?

PARSIFAL: That I know not.

GURNEMANZ: Who is thy father?

PARSIFAL: That I know not.

GURNEMANZ: Who sent thee out on thy journey?

PARSIFAL: That I know not.

GURNEMANZ: Thy name then say—

PARSIFAL: I had full many,

But I remember them no more.

GURNEMANZ: Art ignorant of all!—(A dullard such
I never found, save Kundry here.)

(To the ESQUIRES, of whom quite a number have gathered.)

But go!

Leave not the King in his bath alone!—Go?

(The Esquires have tenderly lifted up the body of the swan, and take it with them toward the lake.)

GURNEMANZ.

(again turning to PARSIFAL.)

Yet say! Knowest naught of what I have ask'd thee;
So tell what thou knowest!

Of something surely hast knowledge?

PARSIFAL.

I know of my mother: Heart-of-Sorrows her name;
In the woods and on moorland wastes
We went and came.

GURNEMANZ.

Who gave thee thy weapon?

PARSIFAL.

I made it myself,
To fright the eagles fierce from the forest.

GURNEMANZ.

Yet eagle-like seemest thyself, and nobly born:—
But why did thy mother not teach thee
Worthier weapons to handle?

(PARSIFAL is silent.)

KUNDRY.

(who has been crouching near the edge of the wood, glancing sharply at PARSIFAL, now interrupts them.)

A fatherless boy was born by the mother;
For in battle slain was Gamuret;
Him such untimely death to spare
She kept all heroes' arms far from him,
Bringing him up as a fool in the forest—
(She laughs.) O folly!

PARSIFAL.

(who has listened with rapt attention.)

Aye! And once along the edge of the wood,
Their noble steeds bestriding,

Came three knights in their armor;

Fain had been just like them,—

They laugh'd and then gallop'd away.

I follow'd fast: alas, I could not o'ertake them:

O'er moorlands I wander'd, uphill and down;

Oft came the night, then broke the day;

My bow my only defender,

Against wolves and mighty people.—

KUNDRY.

Aye robbers and giants fell to his strength,
The terrible boy was feared by them all!

PARSIFAL.

Who feared me? Say!

KUNDRY.

The baneful.

PARSIFAL.

Were they all baneful, who me attacked?

(GURNEMANZ laughs.)

Who is good?

GURNEMANZ *(earnestly.)*

Thy good mother, whom thou hast forsaken,
And who for thee now must pine and grieve.

KUNDRY.

She grieves no more: for his mother is dead.

PARSIFAL.

(in fearful terror.)

Dead!—My mother?—No, no!

KUNDRY.

I rode near by—and saw her dying—

Thee, Fool, she bade—I should greet thee.

(PARSIFAL springs up, rushes towards KUNDRY and seizes her by the throat.)

GURNEMANZ.

Thou crazy stripling! Wouldst thou use force?
What harm has she done? She told the truth,—
For Kundry lies not—yet saw she much.

(After GURNEMANZ has released KUNDRY, PARSIFAL
stands for a long time as if transfixed; then
he is seized by violent trembling.)

PARSIFAL.

I am faint!

(KUNDRY has hastened to a forest spring; brings
water in a horn, and after sprinkling some on
PARSIFAL'S face, hands him to drink.)

GURNEMANZ.

'Tis well! Thus 'twas the Grail commanded:
He victor is who good for evil returns.

KUNDRY.

(turning sadly away.)

Good did I never:—'Tis rest I crave me.

(While GURNEMANZ is attending to PARSIFAL with
fatherly care, KUNDRY drags herself, unobserved
by either, towards a thicket.)

Yea, rest! aye rest, for me, the weary!—
Slumber!—O that I ne'er might waken!

(starting up, in dread.)

Nay! Not slumber!—Horror grasps me!

(She gives a suppressed cry and is seized by violent
trembling; then her arms fall powerless beside her;
her head sinks and she totters wearily further.)

Powerless I am! The time is nigh.—

Slumber—Slumber—O come!

(She sinks down behind the thicket and thence
forward remains unnoticed.)

The Grail Burg.

(A stir is observed towards the lake, and in the back-
ground is seen the procession of KNIGHTS and
ESQUIRES with the litter, wending homeward.)

GURNEMANZ.

From the bath, the King is taken home—

Overhead is the sun,

Now let me to the sacred Feast escort thee;

For—if thou'rt pure,

Then sure the Grail will feed and refresh thee.

(He has placed PARSIFAL'S arm fondly about his
neck and, supporting him, leads him slowly away.)

PARSIFAL.

Who is the Grail?

GURNEMANZ.

Of that anon—

But if to serve it thou art bidden,

From thee the tidings were not hidden:

And lo!—

Methinks I thee well understand:—
No way leads to it through the land,
And none can travel on't moreover,
Who doth it not himself discover.

PARSIFAL.

I scarcely move—

Yet ween that far we've gone.

GURNEMANZ.

Dost see, my son,

Here Time and Space are one!

(Gradually, while GURNEMANZ and PARSIFAL ap-
pear to stride, the scene changes from left to right
imperceptibly: the forest disappears, a door opens in the
rocks, which closes upon both; they are then visible in
ascending passages, through which they seem to pass
along. Long sustained trombone notes begin and
softly swell: the sound of bells is heard, nearer and
nearer. Finally the twain come to a magnificent hall,
which loses itself overhead in a high vaulted dome,
through which the light streams down. From above,
high over the dome, comes the sound of chimes, with
ever increasing distinctness.)

GURNEMANZ.

(turning to PARSIFAL who stands as if spellbound.)

I pray thee heed: and let me see,—

Art thou a Fool and Pure—

What knowledge may here to thee be vouchsaf'd.

On either side of the background a large door is
opened. From the right enter the Knights of the
Holy Grail, in solemn procession. They range them-
selves, during the following chant, gradually, at two
long, covered tables. These are placed parallel, the ends
facing the audience, leaving the centre of the stage
free. Only cups—no dishes—are on the table.

THE GRAIL TEMPLARS.

For His Last Supper duly

We day by day prepare,

E'en though the last one, truly,

That we in life may share.

To Him whose deeds are true,

The Meal doth aye renew;

The Chalice he may lift,

And take the heavenly gift.

VOICES OF YOUNGER MEN.

(as if heard from the mid-height of the hall.)

For a world that slumbered,

With sorrows unnumber'd

He once His own blood offered:

For the Saviour who gave us

His own life to save us,

My own blood here be proffered,

The Body He to death could give,

Shall through that death in us now live.

Boys' VOICES.

(from the extreme height of the dome.)

From Heaven above

Descends the Dove.

The type of Faith supernal :

Be ours as wine

The Blood divine,

The Bread of Life Eternal !

Through the opposite door, AMFORTAS is borne in upon his litter by Esquires and serving brothers; before him march Boys who carry a shrine enveiled in a purple-red covering. This part of the procession goes towards the centre of the background, where underneath a baldachino an elevated couch-bed has been placed. To this AMFORTAS is gently removed from the litter. Before it is a long altar-like marble table, upon which the Boys place the covered shrine. When the chant is ended and all the Knights have taken places about the table, there comes a long silence. From the deepest background there is heard from a vaulted niche behind AMFORTAS' couch, as if coming from a tomb, the voice of the aged :

TITUREL.

My son, Amfortas ! Art thou at thy post ? (silence.)

Shall I the Grail to-day behold and live ? (silence.)

Must I die—by the Saver unattended ?

AMFORTAS.

Woe ! O woe ! O torment sore !

My father—I pray once more,

The function thou assume !

Live thou ! Live ! and let me perish !

TITUREL.

Entombed I live through the Redeemer's grace:

Too weak am I to truly serve him :

In penance thou thy sins efface !—

Reveal the Grail !

AMFORTAS.

Nay ! Leave it unrevealed !—Oh !—

That none—that none may measure all the woe

Its sight awakes in me while rapturing you !—

What is the wound, and all its tortures grim,

Against the stress, the hellish pain,

To this high office—doom'd by him !

Woeful inheritance on me to fall:

On me—the only sinner among ye all;

The highest, holiest Treasure serving,

And asking grace for those far more deserving !

O chastening bitter : never-ended,—

By Him, the Hoard of Grace offended !

To seek of Him His mercy saving

Is aye my sole desiring ;

From my heart's depths salvation craving,

My soul's demure aspiring.

AMFORTAS has again raised himself. While AMFORTAS inclines before the chalice in silent prayer, an ever-increasing, hazy twilight descends.

The hour is nigh :

The radiance sinks upon the Holy Shrine ;

The veil is raised ;

The sacred vessel's consecrated blood,—

O glowing, glorifying flood !

Thrill'd through with bliss of the most rapturous

The fount of blood divine, [smart—

Pours gently in upon my heart :—

The angry stream of my own blood malign,

In wild delirium press'd,

Forth from me madly gushes ;

Toward the world of sinful quest,

With mad'ning whirl outrushes:

Again it forces the door,

Through which it streams once more :—

Here, through the wound, where His was—just—

All pierced by the self same Lance's thrust;—

The wound which the Saviour for us receiv'd,

From which, with blood-tears burning,

The Godliest over Humanity griev'd,

In pity's hallowed yearning ;

From which now from me, in the holiest dwelling—

Of Heavenly Symbols the Warder—

Of Redemption's Balsam the Guarder—

The blood of sin flows night and day,

Ever renewed, from my yearning upwelling.

That oh, no penance e'er can stay !

Have mercy ! Have mercy !

O God of Mercy, have mercy upon me !

Take all thou hast given :

Stay the wound wholly ;

That I may die holy,

Fitted for heaven !

(He sinks back unconscious.)

Boys' VOICES.

“Through pity guided,

A fool yet pure ;

Through him comes

Redemption sure !”

THE KNIGHTS.

’Twas thus thou wast bidden—

Tarry and trust :

Thy office doing to-day !

TITUREL'S VOICE.

Unveil the Grail !

AMFORTAS has again risen in silence. The Boys unveil the golden shrine, from which they then take the “Grail” (an antique chalice of crystal), from which they further remove a covering, and set it before AMFORTAS.

TITUREL.

The blessing!

While AMFORTAS devoutly inclines in prayer before the chalice, an ever-increasing dusk spreads in the hall.

BOYS' VOICES.

"Take and drink of my blood,

'Tis of our love the token:

Take of my body and eat—

'Twas for sinners once broken!"

A blinding ray of light sinks down from above, lighting upon the Cup, which glows in ever-increasing power and illumining purple lustre. AMFORTAS, his mien as if glorified, lifts up the Grail and waves it gently from side to side. All sank upon their knees when the twilight spread around; they now raise their eyes reverently towards the Grail.

TITUREL.

O rapture celestial!—

How glorious the glance of the Lord!

AMFORTAS sets the Grail down again: which now, while the deep gloom again fades, grows paler: thereupon the Boys place the Grail again within the shrine and cover this as before. With the return of the daylight, the cups on the table which are now seen to be filled with wine, are again visible and beside each is a piece of bread. All seat themselves at the table. Also GURNEMANZ, who keeps one place near him vacant, and by a gesture invites PARSIFAL to share the meal. PARSIFAL, however, remains silent and motionless.

BOYS' VOICES.

Wine and bread, the Last Meal's precious,
Changèd once the Grail's Lord gracious,

Through his pity's loving might—

To the Blood's all-glorious tide,

To the Body crucified.

YOUTHS' VOICES.

Blood and Body, blest oblation,
Chang'd are now for your salvation

By the Saviour's loving might—

To the Wine that here we give,

To the Bread with which ye live.

THE KNIGHTS.

(First half.)

Take ye the Bread,

Change it anew,

The body's might increasing;

Till ye be dead

Ever be true,

And work for the Saviour unceasing!

THE KNIGHTS.

(Second half.)

Take of the Wine,

Change it anew,

To life's blood lastingly wanted:

In union divine

And brotherhood true,

To battle with courage undaunted!

(They rise solemnly and all join hands.)

ALL THE KNIGHTS.

Blessèd, believing!

Blessèd in Love!

YOUTHS.

(from the mid-height.)

Blessèd in Love!

BOYS.

(from the extreme height.)

Blessèd, believing!

During the meal in which all participate, AMFORTAS has gradually relapsed from his former ecstatic exaltation; he inclines his head and presses his hand over the wound. The Boys approach him: their motions indicate that the wound has recommenced to bleed; they tend him and assist him to the litter-couch, and while all prepare to leave, in the order of procession in which they came, bear AMFORTAS and the holy vessel forth. The KNIGHTS and ESQUIRES also arrange themselves in the solemn procession, and shortly leave the hall, from which the previous daylight gradually disappears. The bells have again soundèd. During the piercing cry of agony by AMFORTAS, PARSIFAL has made a violent movement, claspèd at his heart spasmodically for some time; now he stands as if spellbound, perfectly motionless. When the last of the KNIGHTS and ESQUIRES have left the hall and the doors are again closed, GURNEMANZ approaches PARSIFAL, vexed, and shakes him on the arm.

GURNEMANZ.

Why standest thou there?

Know'st thou what thou hast seen?

(PARSIFAL shakes his head.)

For sure, thou art only a fool!

(opening a narrow side door.)

Get thee gone—on thy way begone—

Of thee well were we loose—

Letting in future the swans alone,

Go seek thee, thou gander, a goose!

He pushes PARSIFAL out and slams the door after him. He follows the KNIGHTS. Curtains close.





PARSIFAL, ACT II.—THE FLOWER GARDEN SCENE.

Act 2.—Klingsor's Magic Castle.

SCENE—In the inner keep of a tower, open to the sky. Stone steps lead up to the battlements. Darkness in the depths below, which are gained from the ramparts (represented by the stage floor). Magic apparatus and necromantic appliances. KLINGSOR, seated on the ramparts at one side, is looking into a metallic mirror.—He represents the spirit of evil. Having striven in vain to become a Knight of the Grail, expelled from the brotherhood by KING TITUREL, he erected a castle near by the Grail realm and filled it with beautiful maidens, among them KUNDRY, to allure the Knights. KING AMFORTAS has already fallen a victim and is suffering from a wound inflicted upon him by KLINGSOR with the Sacred Spear, which is now in his possession. KLINGSOR is awaiting the coming of PARISFAL.

KLINGSOR.

The hour is nigh :—
My magic towers have lured the foolish youth,
Who, boylike shouting, yet afar I see—
In deathly slumber, by the ban held fast,
Is she whose spell I soon can loosen.
Up then ! To work !

He descends somewhat lower, towards the middle, and there sets light to incense, which soon fills the background with a bluish vapor. Then he resumes his seat, and with mysterious gestures, calls down to the depths

To KUNDRY.

Arise ! Arise ! To me !
Thy Master calls thee, tho' thou art nameless !
She-Lucifer—Rose of Sheol !
Thou who Herodias wert,—and what else ?
Gundryggia there :—Kundry here !
Arise !—Come hither !—Kundry !
Thy Master calls ! Arise !—

The form of KUNDRY is seen arising from the vapor. She appears at first to be asleep. Then she utters a shriek as if awakened by a sudden fright.

KLINGSOR.

Awakest ? Ha !

To my spell once more
Dost thou wake forthwith in proper time ?
Say, where led thee thy wanderings last ?
Pfui !—Off to the knights and their crew,
Where as a brute thou art holden fast ?
Doth it please thee by me not better ?
When thou their Master for me hadst captured,—
Ha ha !—the Grail's most virtuous Guarder,—
What drove thee again from me forth ?

KUNDRY.

(*hoarsely and in broken accents.*)

Oh ! Oh !—
Gloomy night !—
Madness !—Oh !—Rage !—
Oh !—Anguish !—Sleep—sleep,—
Deepest sleep !—Death !

KLINGSOR.

Wert wakened by some other ? Hey ?

KUNDRY.

Aye !—My curse !—
Oh !—Yearning—Yearning !—

KLINGSOR.

Ha ha !—Yearn'st for the chastely Templars ?

KUNDRY.

I—I—served them !

KLINGSOR.

Aye !—Aye !—To repair the damage direful,
That on them hast wantonly wrought ?
But they cannot help thee ;
Venal are all,
If offered the proper price ;
The firmest will fall,
If he sink to thy folding :—
And so he fall to the Spear,
That from their Master himself once I won.
But—the most dangerous of all has yet to be met—
Whose foolhood serves as shield.

KUNDRY : I—will not.—No !—No !—

KLINGSOR : That wilt thou—since thou must !

KUNDRY : Nay—thou canst—not—hold me.

KLINGSOR : But if I seize thee ?

KUNDRY : Thou ?

KLINGSOR : Thy master !

KUNDRY: And whence thy might?

KLINGSOR: Ha! Because, against me,
All thy power—is as naught.

KUNDRY (*laughing grimly*) Ha ha! Art thou chaste?

KLINGSOR: Why ask of me—thou outcast wretch!
(*He sinks in gloomy thought.*)

KLINGSOR.

Fearfullest stress!

Thus mocks the foul fiend again,
As once,—when I for holiness strove!

Fearfullest need!

Uncontrollable yearning's pain!

Lust infernal's terrible stress,

That down to silence once I could press—

Laughs and mocks at me wide—

Through thee, thou Satan's bride!

Have a care!

Once for contempt and scorn paid atonement,

The haughty one, strong in his sanctity,

Who spurned me from him forth:—

His brood fell to me,

Unredeemed,

Shall the Holiest's Guarder soon languish;

And soon, I ween me—

Warder I'll be of the Grail!

Ha ha!

How suited, forsooth, Amfortas thy taste,

Whom I for rapture to thee placed?

KUNDRY.

Oh!—Sorrow!—Sorrow!

Weak e'en he! Weak—all are!—

'Neath the curse with me

Are all of them fallen!—

O! Slumber eternal's

Only release—

How—how can I gain it?

KLINGSOR.

He who defies thee brings thee release—

Now try with the youth who comes nigh!

KUNDRY.

I will not!

KLINGSOR.

(*mounting hastily to the ramparts.*)

See there—he climbs to the tower.

KUNDRY.

O sorrow! Sorrow!

For this was I wakened?

Must it—be?

KLINGSOR.

Ha—is the youth not handsome?

KUNDRY.

Oh! Oh! Woe is me!

KLINGSOR.

(*winding a horn.*)

Hoho!—Ye watchers! Warriors!

Heroes—Up! Foes are nigh!

(*clash of weapons heard outside.*)

See—How they storm to the ramparts,

The deluded, faithful vassals,

To fight for their winsome she-devils!

Courage! Courage!—

Ha ha! No fear doth he know!

From Hero Ferris he's wrested a weapon,

And flashes it fiercely, fighting the swarm!

(*KUNDRY commences to laugh hysterically.*)

How badly the boobies bleed from his blows—

One's struck on the arm—that one on his hip—

Ha ha—they waver—they're routed—

With his wounds each takes himself home!

Ye richly deserve it!—

Oh that full soon

The whole of the troublesome brood

So might just slaughter each other!—

Ha! How proudly he stands on the rampart!

How fair his cheeks, that glow like the roses,

As, childlike, astonished,

On the garden, delighted, he looks!

Hey! Kundry.

He turns to look round. KUNDRY'S laughter has grown more and more ecstatic, and has finally developed to a convulsive scream. Suddenly her form is no longer seen; the bluish light has disappeared; in its place darkness in the depths.

What?—At thy work?

Ha ha! The magic I know well

That evermore calls thee to service for me!—

Hey there, my merry boy—

Though foreordainment thy dower,—

Too young and dull,—

Fallest thou now in my power!

From purity once but sever,

Shalt thou be mine for ever!

He sinks slowly with the whole tower and at the same time the magic garden rises, completely filling the stage. Tropical vegetation, most luxuriant growth of flowers; at the back the scene is closed in by the battlements of the castle walls, which join with the abutments of the castle itself (in florid Arabian style), with terraces. On the wall stands PARSIFAL, gazing down upon the garden in astonishment. From every side, from the garden as well as from the balace, rush in, first singly then in greater numbers, beautiful girls, in garb hastily thrown about them, as if they had been suddenly awakened by fright.

The flower Maidens.

GIRLS: Here was the tumult!
 Weapons! Wild confusion!
 OTHERS: Horror! Vengeance! Up!
 Where is the culprit?
 SEVERAL: My belovèd is wounded.
 OTHERS: Pray tell me where mine is.
 OTHERS: I awoke all alone,—
 Where hath he vanished?
 SEVERAL OTHERS: There in the castle?—
 'They're bleeding, wounded!
 Where is the wretch?
 Behold him! Look!
 There with my Ferris' sword!
 I saw him storm up the walls,
 I heard, too, the master's voice,
 My knight hastened here;—
 They all rushed at him, but each
 Was received by his terrible blade.
 The fearless! The slaughterer!
 All of them fled from him!—
 Thou there! Thou there!
 Why bring us such direful woe?
 Accurst, accurst thou shalt be!
 (PARSIFAL springs down lower to the garden.)

THE GIRLS.
 Ha! Stripling! Wouldst thou defy us?
 Why hast thou slaughtered our lovers?
 PARSIFAL.
 (in great astonishment.)
 Ye winsome women—how could I help it?
 To such loveliness did they bar not the way?

GIRLS.
 To us wouldst thou come?
 Nor saw'st us before?
 PARSIFAL.
 Ne'er saw before such lovely delight!
 I call ye lovely;—am I not right?
 THE GIRLS.
 (changing from surprise to merriment.)
 And surely thou wouldst not beat us?

PARSIFAL.
 Nay, surely not.
 GIRLS.
 But harm
 Full much thou hast done us and grievous:—
 Of our playmates wouldst thou bereave us?
 Who'll play with us now?

PARSIFAL.
 Forsooth will I!—

THE GIRLS.
 If thou art kind, so pray come nigh—
 And then, wilt thou not scold us,
 For sweet reward mayst hold us;
 For gold we do not play,
 Love's gentle meed is the pay:
 Wouldst thou comfort us truly,
 The winnings earn from us duly?
Some of the girls have entered the bowers: they now return, clad in garments of flowers and even appearing like flowers; and surround PARSIFAL.

FLOWER MAIDENS.
 (singly.)
 Hands off the stripling! He belongs to me!
 No!—No!—Me!—Me!—
 OTHERS.
 Oh, the hussies! A trick they've play'd us!
They retire and soon return in similar flowery garb.

THE GIRLS.
 Come! Come!
 Gentle stripling:
 I'll be thy blossom;
 And in rapturous rippling,
 Let my love pierce to thy bosom!
While in graceful play, they dance round PARSIFAL in changing figures, stroking his cheeks and chin.

PARSIFAL.
 (quietly enjoying the scene: standing in their midst.)
 How fragrant! How sweet!
 Are ye all flowers?

THE GIRLS.
 (sometimes singly, sometimes together.)
 The garden's pride,
 Whose fragrance and splendor,
 To the Master in Spring we surrender;
 Each bloom a bride,
 In sunshine and summer,
 Awaiting the call of the Comer.
 Be to us kind and true,
 Nor hoard from the flowers their due!—
 And canst thou not love us nor cherish,
 Then surely we wither and perish!

GIRLS.
 1. Upon thy bosom let me rest!
 2. O Love, let me caress thee!
 3. To me let me press thee!
 4. I'll close thy mouth with kisses!
 5. Nay, I am fairest and best!
 6. To me, wouldst know what bliss is!

PARSIFAL.

(softly repelling their seductive advances.)

Ye wild, winsome pressure of roses—

If I'm to play with you, your circle too close is!

GIRLS: Surely not wroth?

PARSIFAL: I would not harm you!

GIRLS: We're quarreling for thee.

PARSIFAL: Pray calm you!

FIRST GIRL: Away with you!

See, he wants me!

SECOND: No, me!

THIRD: He mine is!

FOURTH: No, mine!

FIRST: *(to PARSIFAL)* Wouldst spurn me?

SECOND: Wouldst drive me away?

FIRST: Art of women so frightened?

SECOND: Of fear be thou lightened!

SOME: How cold he is—so bashful in wooing!

OTHERS: Should flowers, like the bees,

Do all the cooing?

FIRST HALF CHORUS: A fool he is surely!

A GIRL: I'm not sad to lose him!

OTHERS: Then we others will choose him.

OTHERS: No, we! No, we!—

Me too!—Here! Here!

PARSIFAL.

(half in anger turns away, as if to escape.)

Away!—Your wiles are vain!

From a flowery arbor at the side is heard the voice of

KUNDRY.

Parsifal!—Tarry!—

The girls are terrified and immediately cease their witcheries. PARSIFAL stands as if dumb-founded.

PARSIFAL.

Parsifal . . . —

So once in dreams—I was named by my mother!

KUNDRY'S VOICE.

Nay linger! Parsifal!—

For here shall rapturous bliss be thine!

Ye childish enchantresses, leave him alone:

Flowers, born but to wither:

Not sent was he here for your delight!

Go home, care for the wounded,

Lonely awaits you many a knight.

THE GIRLS.

(reluctantly leaving PARSIFAL.)

O the sorrow! this parting grievous!

A'as! Alack a day!

Let all the world beside but leave us,

If he could with us stay.—

Farewell! Farewell!

So gentle! So handsome!

Thou—Fool!

*With the last word they rush towards the castle, laughing.***The Temptation.**

PARSIFAL.

Was all this but a fleeting dream?

He looks timidly towards the side whence came the voice. There stands revealed, through the withdrawal of the branches of the thicket, a youthful female figure of surpassing beauty—KUNDRY, in her form completely changed—lying upon a bed of flowers, and clad in fantastic drapery that lightly veils her form.

PARSIFAL.

Didst thou call me who am nameless?

KUNDRY.

Thee truly—Foolish Pure one—

“Fal parsi”—

Thou Guileless Fool—art “Parsifal.”—

So spake, when in Arabia's realm expir'd,

Thy father Gamuret to thee, his son;—

While yet enwombed wert safely shelter'd

With this same name he, dying, hail'd thee:—

This to reveal thee, long I've waited here:—

What led thee hither save the wish to know it?

PARSIFAL.

Nor saw I, nor dream'd, of what I now

See well, and what now fills my soul with awe:—

Art thou a blossom of this lovely garden?

KUNDRY.

No Parsifal, thou foolish quester—

Far, far away my home is!—

That thou shouldst find me, here I tarried long;

From realms far distant came, where much I saw;

I saw the child upon its mother's breast,

Its infant prattle laughs yet on my ear:—

While stress'd and anguish'd,

How laugh'd out Heart-Sorrow proudly,

When, while she yet languish'd,

Her Heart's Pride crow'd to her loudly!

In mossy bed the infant nested

Clasp'd fondly till in sleep he rested.—

In tears and sorrow

The mother watch'd him while he slumber'd,

Who on the morrow,

Was waked by dew of tears unnumbered.

All grief was she: yet sorrowing ever,

Of thy good father's love and death:

That equal need might reach thee never—

The burden of her every breath.

From weapons far, to mortal strife a stranger,

She would have kept thee safe from every danger;

Yet anguish'd sore alas, and fearing

That worldly words of knowledge reach thy hearing.

Dost thou not hear yet her moaning voice
 When afar so long thou didst stay?
 Aye, how did the mother's fond heart rejoice,
 Seeing thee haste on thy homeward way.
 When to her heart her darling she press'd,
 Didst feel not a thrill pass through thy breast?
 But thou sawst not the anguish sore,
 That thou couldst well have banished;
 When home thou camest nevermore,—
 All trace of thee had vanished.
 Long days and nights she waited,
 Her sorrow ne'er abated,
 Till grief wore out its smart:
 For death alone she sigh'd;
 Her anguish broke her heart—
 And—Heart-of-Sorrows—died!

PARSIFAL.

(growing more and more earnest, at last terribly and deeply affected he sinks down at KUNDRY's feet.)

Sorrow! Sorrow! O mis'ry! Where was I?
 Mother! Sweetest, holiest mother!
 Thy son, thy son,—so could' do murder?
 O fool!—Reckless, frivolous fool!—
 O, whither thy way, so to forget her?
 So, O son, to forget thee—
 Truest, dearest of mothers!

KUNDRY.

(still in her reclining position, she bends over PARSIFAL, gently places her hand upon his brow and winds her arm fondly about his neck.)

Wast by pain never stressed?
 Then comfort sweetly
 Never thrilled through thy breast:
 The woe that in thee lives,
 Replace completely
 With joys that Love alone gives!

PARSIFAL.

(filled with remorse, he sinks into deeper and deeper despondency.)

My mother! O mother! Could I forget thee?
 Ha! What else have I, thoughtless, forgot?
 What thought had I for others' lot?
 And else than folly—I have not!

KUNDRY.

Confession

Ends rue for all transgression;
 And wholly

To sense can change all folly.

Learn thou that love inspiring,
 To Gamuret outpoured,
 When Heartswoe's blest desiring
 Enrapturèd her lord:

That life and limb
 Gave thee from him,—
 And death and folly turns to bliss:
 For thee
 Now be
 Thy mother's benediction this—
 Of Love, the first glad kiss!

She bends her head down to PARSIFAL and presses her lips to his mouth in a long kiss.

PARSIFAL.

(starting up with a gesture of intense terror; a great change has suddenly come over him, he places his hand to his heart, as if he would suppress intense pain.)

Amfortas! — —

The wound! The wound!

Within me raging and burning—

O sorrow! Sorrow!

Direfullest sorrow!

From deepest depths doth horror arise!

Oh!—Oh!—

Woe-laden,

Wretched monster!

I saw the red wound bleeding,

And now it bleeds in me—

Here here!—

(while KUNDRY stares at him in alarm and wonder, PARSIFAL continues as if completely carried away.)

No, no! Not the wound, the burning!

Flow on ye blood, in torrents gush on!—

Here, in my breast, is the blaze—

The yearning, the terrible yearning—

That all my senses holds and sways,

In Love's torment inspiring!—

How my heart shudders, trembles, thrills,

In sinfullest desiring!

(with terrible calmness and awe.)

My glance is held, awed by the Cup Divine:—

The hallow'd blood grows red:

Redemption's rapture, sweet and mild,

Thrills through each spirit reconcil'd—

Yet in my heart the torment will not weaken:—

I hear the Saviour's lamentation,

The woeful, woeful wailing,

For His dishonor'd sacred Shrine:—

“Redeem me, save me,

From hands all stained and guilty!”

Thus—rang God's accusation,

Loudly, filling me with terror,

And I—O fool—O coward—

In wanton boyish folly fled from him!

(throws himself despairingly upon his knees.)

Redeemer! Saviour! Lord of Grace!
How can I sin like mine efface?

KUNDRY.

(whose astonishment has changed to passionate wonder, timidly tries to go nearer to PARSIFAL.)

Exalted knight! Why thus repine?
Look up! Be Love's enchantment thine!

PARSIFAL.

(still in the same position, looking up blankly at KUNDRY who bends over him and caresses him fondly; her actions he follows and describes.)

Yes: So her voice was: Spake so to him:
The self same look: I recognized it well:
The glances that led him, with wanton glamor,
The luscious lips that laughing tempted him so;
So, blushing, bent she o'er him,
So rais'd she high her head;
So flutter'd her locks with her laughter,
So circled her arms round his neck,
So soft were her cheeks and seductive:—
In league with every torment grim
His soul's salvation

She kiss'd away from him,
With her cursèd kiss!—

(with the last words he has gradually risen; now he stands erect and pushes KUNDRY from him.)

Seductress—Away—Get thee gone!
Leave me! Leave me! Begone!

KUNDRY.

with intense passion.

O monster!—Ha!—
Can thy heart borrow
From others a sorrow,
So feel thou my heart's desolation;
Art thou redeemer,
What bars thee, dreamer,
To bring us, united, salvation?

Through endless ages, I waited thy coming. —

My saviour,—waited,—yearn'd,
For him whom once I spurn'd!—
Oh!—

Knewest thou the curse
That now, awake or sleeping,
Through death and life,
And joy and weeping—
To newer torments steel'd anew—
Follows my existence through!—
I saw—him—him
And mock'd him, ~
His look on me lit—

I search for him, from world to world,
In hope once more to meet him;

When earthward hurl'd,
Dream that his glance on me rests,
That his look on me lights in grace:
Then comes the cursèd mocking laughter o'er me,
A sinner sinks to my embrace!—
Then laughing wildly!—
Weep I cannot,—
Then shouting, shrieking,
Screeching, raging,
Sink down in newer frenzied night,
From which I'd scarcely woke to light!
Thou, long awaited in mortal yearning,
Thou, once repulsed, with laughter spurning;—
O, let me on thy bosom rest,
But for an hour in thy love be blest,
And though by God and man outcast,
By thee absolv'd, and redeemed, at last!

PARSIFAL.

Through endless days,
Thou would'st be damn'd with me,
If for an hour,
Forgetful of my sending
I sank beneath thy power!
Yet thy salvation, too, I bring,
If thou no more to Yearning cling;
The solace that thy woes can banish,
Gives not the source from which it flows,
And grace for thee must ever vanish
Till that same fount for thee shall close!
'Twas others' woes and sorrows, ah—
On which I pitying look'd afar:—
The brethren there, in need distressing,
The body deadening and oppressing:—
But who can know, and clearly show,
The source of true salvation's flow?
O mis'ry!—Only refuge thine!—
O world, all frenzy-riven;
In ardent search for grace divine
Thus to damnation's fountain driven!

KUNDRY.

(in wild exultation.)

So was it my kiss
That all thy knowledge brought thee?
Let Love's full rapture sweetly
Raise thee to godhood completely.
Wouldst thou redemption for all men gain?
Hath God the hour reveal'd?
Then let me sink to everlasting pain,
My wounds stay aye unheal'd!

PARSIFAL.

Redemption, guilty one, thine, too, may be.

KUNDRY.

Let me, O godly one, but love thee,
Redemption surely, then were mine!

PARSIFAL.

Love and redemption, thy reward be,
Showest thou me
To Amfortas safely the way.

KUNDRY.

(breaking into a rage.)

Nevermore shalt thou find it!—
Let the doom'd one sink to destruction.—
The unhallow'd,
Lust-languishing,—
Whom I once laughed at—laughed at—
Ha ha!—was struck by his own good Spear.

PARSIFAL.

Who dared so to wound him with the Sacred Spear?

KUNDRY.

He—He—

Who bade my laughter once to cease:
That curse—now—brings me strength's increase:
Here against thee I summon the Spear,
Giv'st thou the sinner thy pitying ear! . .

Ha! Madness!

Pity—Pity for me!

Only an hour be mine,—

Only an hour be thine—

And on thy pathway

Led thou straightway shalt be.

She would embrace him but he repulses her violently from him.

PARSIFAL.

Begone, unhallowed wretch!

KUNDRY.

(beating her breast, calling in frenzy)

Help me! Help me! This way!

Seize on the culprit! To help!

Bar every egress!

Bar every pathway!

Aye, fleest thou hence and findest

All the ways the world over,

The one that thou wouldst,

Thou nevermore canst discover!

For road and pathway

That from me shall lead thee—

For thee be cursed to thy search.

Wander wildly,

Wide through the world,

With guile for my gift, as thy guide.

KLINGSOR has appeared on the ramparts. The Girls also hurry on the scene, coming from the bourg, and hasten towards KUNDRY.

KLINGSOR.

(poising a lance.)

Hold there! Fair game art thou for spoilage here!
The fool be mark unto his Master's Spear.

He hurls the spear at PARSIFAL; it remains, however, floating in the air, suspended over his head. PARSIFAL grasps it.

PARSIFAL.

With this good Symbol I ward off thy magic:—

As the wound it shall close,

That with it once thou clavedst,

In wreck and in ruin

Perish this treacherous pride!

He swings the Spear, making with it the sign of the cross, whereupon, as if by an earthquake, the bourg falls in ruins. The garden withers like a desert, and the FLOWER MAIDENS like withered flowers lie strewn around. KUNDRY, with a piercing cry, has fallen to the ground. PARSIFAL pauses for a moment. Standing on the top of a ruined wall, he turns and addresses KUNDRY:—

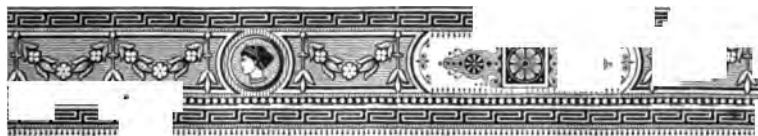
PARSIFAL.

Know'st well,

O Kundry, where thou canst find me again!

He disappears. KUNDRY raises herself up a little and gazes after him. The curtains close.

END OF ACT II.



Act 3.—In the Realm of the Grail.

SCENE.—*A Springtime landscape, with flowery meads. The forest stretches down to the foreground and extends to the right; on one side is a spring of water. Opposite, somewhat lower down, a simple hermitage. GURNEMANZ is now extremely aged, and appears as a hermit. He is clad in the garb of a Templar of the Grail; he comes forth from the hut and listens.*

GURNEMANZ.

From yonder came the groaning—
Nor moans stricken game like that,
And most surely not on the Holiest Morn of all:
Methinks I recognize the stressful cry!

A hollow moaning is heard, as from one waking from a terrible dream. GURNEMANZ advances toward a thorny thicket, pulls the branches asunder: then pauses suddenly.

Ha!—She!—Here again?
The winterly thicket of thorn
Held her concealed: for how long?—
Up!—Kundry!—Up!
The Winter is gone, and Spring is here!
Awake! Awake to the Spring!—
Cold—and stiff!

This time truly I deem'd her dead:—
Yet 'twas her moaning cry that I heard.

He drags KUNDRY, apparently stiff and lifeless, out of the thicket, and does his utmost to restore her. Finally she awakes. She is clad in penitents' garb, as in the first act, but the wildness has gone from her mien and bearing. She stares long at GURNEMANZ. Then she raises herself up, arranges her hair and dress and goes about at once like a serving maid to her work.

GURNEMANZ.

Thou wilder'd one!—
Hast thou no word for me?
Are these thy thanks,
That from deathly slumber,
Once more I woke thee to life?

KUNDRY.

(inclining her head slowly: then in broken accents.)
Service . . . Service . . .

GURNEMANZ.

That will not give thee care!—

No errand is urgent there more:
Herbs and roots,
Now everyone finds for himself:
Well taught by the beasts of the woods.
(KUNDRY, discovering the hut, has entered.)

GURNEMANZ.

(looking after her, surprised.)

How strangely altered is her step!
Caused was this by the Holiest Day?
O Day of Mercy to us given!
'Twas sure for her redemption
That from the wretch away,
Her deathly sleep was driven!

KUNDRY comes from the hut again. She carries a water krug and goes toward the spring. Arriving there she perceives yet afar some one approaching, and turns to inform GURNEMANZ.

GURNEMANZ.

(looking toward the wood.)

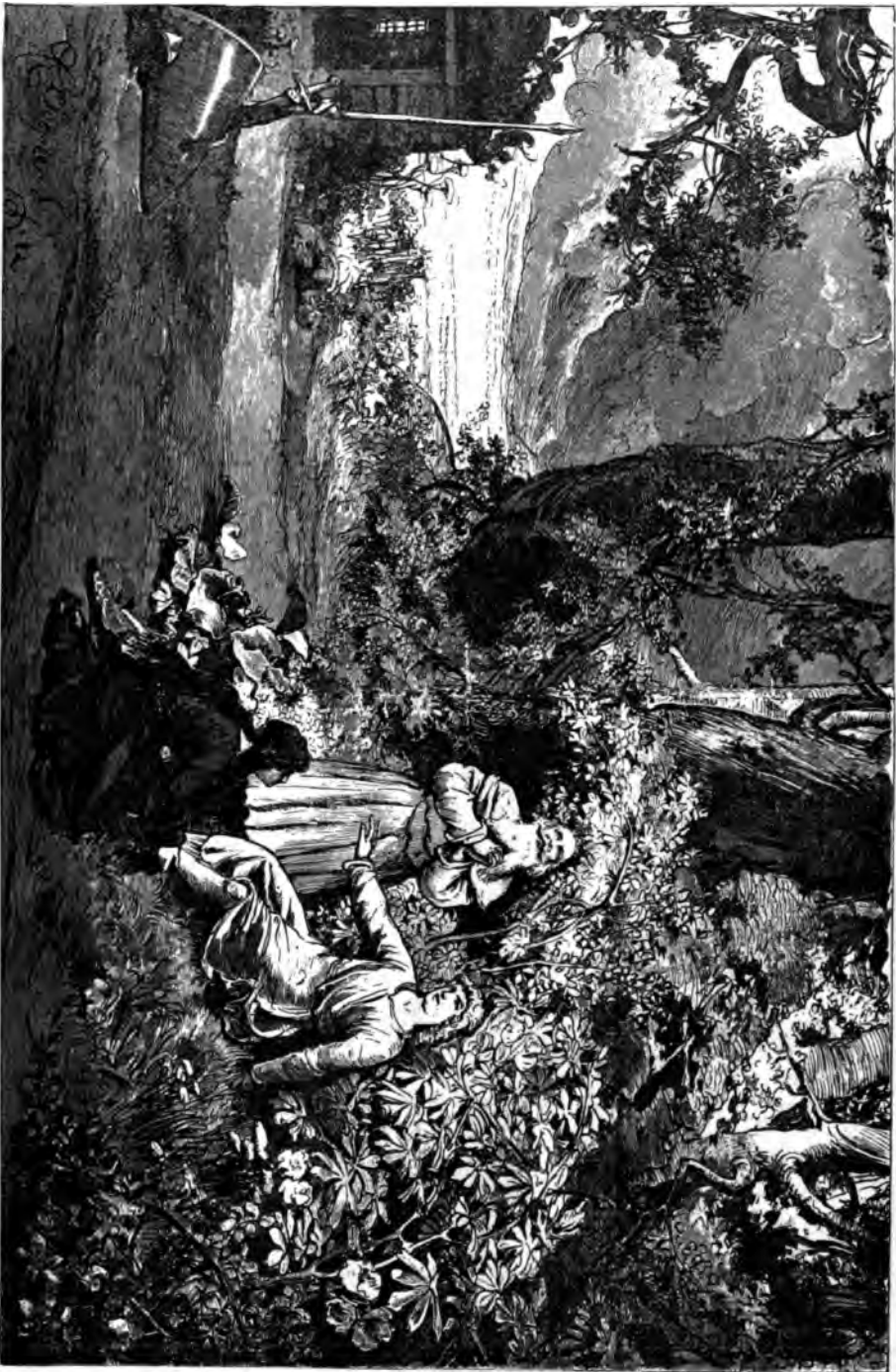
Who yonder comes to the hallowed spring?
Encased in gloomy armor—
He is no Templar, truly.

KUNDRY leaves slowly with the filled krug, going toward the hut. GURNEMANZ, surprised, waits to observe the new comer. PARSIFAL enters from the wood. He is clad entirely in black armor; with closed helmet and lowered spear he advances, with sunken head, dreamily hesitating, and seats himself upon the little grassy knoll near the spring.

GURNEMANZ.

(after observing him for a long time.)

Hail to thee, O guest!
Art thou astray? The path shall I out-point thee?
(PARSIFAL gently shakes his head.)
Hast thou no word of greeting, guest?
(PARSIFAL inclines his head.)



PARSIFAL, ACT III.—THE FOOT-WASHING SCENE.

GURNEMANZ.

(*vexedly.*)

Hei!—What?

If by thy vow

Thou to silence so art holden :

By mine I'm minded, too,

Here to inform thee what is due :—

Here thou dost stand on hallow'd ground :

Men come not arm'd and weapon'd here,

With vizor closed, and shield and spear,—

O'er all to-day—know'st thou then not—

What Holy Day is this?

(*PARSIFAL shakes his head.*)

Aye! Tell me whence thy way?

And with what pagan didst thou stay,

That thou knowest not, to-day

The hallow'd, holiest Good Friday is?

(*PARSIFAL's head sinks still deeper.*)

Remove thy weapons!

Grieve not so the Lord and Master,

Who on this day, defenceless, stood

To shed for the world his precious blood!

PARSIFAL rises and thrusts the Spear into the round before him; he lays down his shield, helmet and sword before it; and kneels in front of the spear, praying in silence. GURNEMANZ observes him, astonished and deeply moved, and beckons to KUNDRY. PARFIFAL raises his eyes in fervent prayer, reverent, to the point of the Lance.

GURNEMANZ.

(*softly to KUNDRY.*)

Dost know him not?

'Tis he who once the swan laid low.

(*KUNDRY assents by a slight nod.*)

In truth 'tis he!—

The Fool—whom in scorn I bade from hence!

What path did he discover?

The Spear,—I know full well.

Oh!—Holiest Day!

To which my soul awakes at last!

(*KUNDRY has turned away her face.*)

PARSIFAL.

rising slowly from his attitude of prayer, gazes calmly around him and extends his hand gently in greeting)

All praise that I once more have found thee!

GURNEMANZ.

And dost thou know me still?

Dost recognize me,

By grief and woe so deeply bow'd?

How cam'st thou here? And whence?

PARSIFAL.

Through error and on suff'ring's path I wander'd :

May I now fondly dream that all is ended,

Now that the forest's murmur,

I find again all round me?

And thou, good Ancient, giv'st me welcome?

Or—is it illusion?

All changed, me seems, is all?

GURNEMANZ.

So say, to whom thy way shall lead thee?

PARSIFAL.

To him—whose grievous moaning,

A dullard, awestruck, once I heard;

To whom, to bring good healing,

I may believe that I am chosen.

Yet—ah!—The saving way was aye denied me :

In pathless distraction,

By a wild'ring curse I was driven :

Countless distresses,

Battles and conflicts,

Forced me afar from the path,

That I fancied so surely I'd found.

Then wildest despair overcame me :—

To hold the Treasure uninjured,

Safely to ward it,

Surely to guard it,

Aye, wounds from every weapon I won.

For I was bidden

Never in battle to bear it :

Undeild

At my side ever wore it,

That home I might restore it :—

It yonder gleams in radiance clear,—

The Grail's all-hallow'd Spear!

GURNEMANZ.

O glory! Heavenly grace!

O marvel! Holy, wondrous marvel!

(*after he has somewhat collected himself.*)

Good Knight: if 'twas a curse

That drove thee from the proper path,

Then surely it all vanished hath!—

Art now within the Grail's revier,

Thy coming wait the Templars here :—

Ah—they have need of Healing,

The Healing thou dost bring!—

Since that sad day when thou didst here abide,

The sorrow then to thee revealed,—

Our anguish,—reached the highest tide :

Amfortas, with his wound hot-burning,

From hideous torture upward yearning,

For death in maddening defiance loudly cried.

No prayers, no sorrows of his Templars
 Could move him more to assume the Holy Office :
 Enshrined and hidden long hath lain the Grail :

Yet hopes the sin-repentant Warder,
 Since death from him yet stays,
 If on it he might gaze,
 His end might so be hastened
 And ended so a life by woe thus chasten'd.

The Holy Meal to us is now denied,
 And common viands must suffice us,
 Whereby doth wither our good Templars strength :
 Nor cometh message more,
 Nor call to aid the oppressèd, as of yore :—
 Wan and weary, wander lost,
 Faint-hearted, crushed, the goodly Templar host !
 Here in the woodland lone I hid myself
 For death in calmness waiting,
 To which my old commander, aye, had fallen ;
 For Titurel, my hallowed Lord,
 When he the Grail's refulgence could not look on,
 Expir'd—a man—like others.

PARSIFAL.
(in intense grief.)

And I—'twas I
 Who all this mis'ry wrought !
 With what unheard of,
 What all-grievous guilt,
 Must this so foolish head
 Eternally be burdened,
 Since no atonement and no penance
 My blindness sore can banish :—
 To whom when Saving Work is given,
 On ways delusive driven,
 Sees every path of Saving from him vanish.

He is on the point of falling, helpless. GURNEMANZ supports him and lets him sink down slowly upon the grassy knoll. KUNDRY has brought out an ewer with water to sprinkle on PARSIFAL'S face.

GURNEMANZ.
(waving KUNDRY away.)
 Not so !—

The sacred fount itself
 Shall freshen our good pilgrim's bath :
 Methinks, a mighty work
 Shall he to-day accomplish,—
 A high and holy function doing :—
 So be he pure as day,
 Now be his way-won stains
 From him most surely washed away !

They turn PARSIFAL towards the spring. KUNDRY loosens the greaves from his legs and bathes his feet; GURNEMANZ relieves him of his cuirass.

PARSIFAL.
(gently and wearily.)

Shall I to Amfortas hence be escorted ?

GURNEMANZ.
 Most surely, there the glorious bourg invites :
 The sad sepulture of my Lord belov'd,
 Doth summon me the way :
 The Grail once more shall be to us revealèd :—
 The long neglected Function,
 To-day once more fulfilling—
 [That saving grace shall bring the father,
 Who by his son's great guilt laid low,
 Would now atone for all the woe—]
 Amfortas promised us.

PARSIFAL.
(looking with wonder at KUNDRY.)
 Hast bathed my feet, O Kundry,
 So sprinkle thou my head, O Friend !

GURNEMANZ.
(taking in his hands water from the spring and sprinkling it over PARSIFAL'S head.)
 Aye, blessèd be O Pure One, through the Pure !
 So be from thee all guilt
 And potent sorrow driven !

KUNDRY has taken a golden vial from her bosom, and has poured its contents over PARSIFAL'S feet; these she now dries with her hair which she has unloosed.

PARSIFAL.
(takes the vial and hands it to GURNEMANZ.)
 Hast thou my feet anointed,
 Anoint my head, O Titurel's companion :
 That He to-day as King surely may greet me.

GURNEMANZ.
(emptying the contents upon PARSIFAL'S head and then folding his hands upon it.)
 Thus was it all appointed :
 My blessing on thy head ;
 As King, art thou anointed—
 Thou—Pure One—

Compassionate Sufferer,
 Healingful Comforter,
 Thou who Redemption's sorrows surely suffered,
 The lingering burden from his head remove !

PARSIFAL.
(unobserved scoops up some water from the spring, bends over KUNDRY who is kneeling before him and sprinkles her head.)
 My first high function thus be done :
 Be thou baptised,—
 And trust in the Redeemer !
KUNDRY bends her head and seems to weep bitterly.

Good Friday's Spell.

PARSIFAL.

(turns round and gazes enraptured upon forest and meadow, which are bathed in the morning light.)

Methinks to-day the meads are wondrous fair!—

Full many a magic flower I've seen
That round my neck all wantonly would cluster:
Yet never saw, so mild and sweet,
The frondage, flowers and blossoms,—
Their fragrance pure as child's delight,
And speaking fondest trust to me.

GURNEMANZ.

'Tis all Good Friday's magic, Lord!

PARSIFAL.

Alas! His day of agony!
When surely all that buds and blooms,
And breathing lives, and lives again,
Should mourn and weep and sorrow.

GURNEMANZ.

Thou seest—that is not so—
But sinners' tears it is of penance
That here, with heavenly dew,
Fall down on mead and field,
And make them bloom, rejoicing;
Now all His creatures live anew,
And at the Saviour's trace revealed,
Their praise and prayers are voicing.
Upon the Cross they can not see Him languish,
So up to Man Redeemed they, trusting, look,
Who feels releas'd from stress of sin and anguish,
Through God's great sacrifice made clean and pure:
The Flowers know how love can hatred vanquish,
To-day of human feet they have no dread:
For as the Lord with heavenly patience filled,
Compassion took and for Men bled,
Now Man to-day, with glory thrill'd,
Spares them with careful tread:—
All Creatures that rejoice in life,
And all that blooms and passes hence,
Sees Nature, freed from sin and strife,
Wake to her day of Innocence.

KUNDRY *has slowly raised her head and looks with moistened eyes, earnestly pleading, upon PARSIFAL.*

PARSIFAL.

I saw them wither—those now in anguish!
Do they now for redemption languish?
E'en thy own tears shall be as blessed dew,—
Thou weepest—lo,—the meadows smile anew!
He kisses her gently upon the brow.—Distant sound of bells, gradually increasing.

GURNEMANZ.

Noon-tide—

The hour is come—

Permit, O Lord, that thy servant escort thee!

GURNEMANZ *has brought the tunic mantle of a Templar of the Grail; he and KUNDRY then array PARSIFAL with it. The landscape changes slowly, as in the first act, but reversely. PARSIFAL grasps the Spear, and with KUNDRY follows GURNEMANZ.*

After the woodland has entirely disappeared, and portals in the rocks have opened, beyond which the three become invisible, there is seen, while the sound of bells is heard ever nearer, processions of Templars in mourning garb, passing through vaulted passages. Finally there is revealed the whole of the great hall of the first act, only without the long tables. Dim light.

The doors open again. From one side come the Templars, escorting TITUREL's body in its coffin. From the other side AMFORTAS is borne in upon his litter-couch; before him is carried the veiled shrine containing the Grail. In the centre is the catafalque, behind that a canopied throne, upon which AMFORTAS is placed.

CHANT OF THE KNIGHTS-TEMPLARS DURING THE PROCESSION.

FIRST TRAIN.

(with the Grail and AMFORTAS.)

We safely bear, in sheltering shrine,
The Grail to the function most holy:
Whom hide ye there in the gloomy shrine,
And sorrowing, hither bear?

SECOND TRAIN.

(with TITUREL's body.)

A hero is held in the funeral shrine;
It holds his hallowed strength;
That God himself once gave him to ward,—
Titirel hither we bear.

FIRST TRAIN.

Who struck him so low, who in God's own care
God once safely sheltered?

SECOND TRAIN.

Struck down by age's burdening blight,
Since the Grail he no more could look on.

FIRST TRAIN.

Who holds from his gaze the Grail's holy Splendor?

SECOND TRAIN.

He—whom ye are bearing, the sinfulness Warder.

FIRST TRAIN.

We escort him to-day: for once and only,
And nevermore,
Will he fulfill his high office.

SECOND TRAIN.

Sorrow! Sorrow! Thou Lord of the Grail!

Ah! This once and last,
Do thou thine office to-day.

The coffin is set down upon the catafalque. AMFORTAS is placed upon the couch.

AMFORTAS.

Yea, sorrow! Sorrow! Woe on me fall!

So do I willingly cry:
Better than all if ye gave me death—
For guilt the mildest atonement.

The coffin is opened. At the sight of TITUREL'S corpse, all burst forth in loud laments.

AMFORTAS.

(raising himself and turning to the body.)

My father!

High and holiest of heroes!

Thou Purest, to whom once angels inclined:—

He who ever death desired,
Gave—gave thee to death!

Oh—Thou who now in heavenly glory

The Saviour himself dost behold—

Implore thou of Him that his hallowed blood,—

If once more through its blessing

The brethren all may be quickened,—

While them their life renewing,

At last may bring me death!

Death! Dying!

The only mercy!

In this terrible wound, —let its poison perish,

The heart that it gnaws, now chill unto death!

My father! Hear—hear me!

Unto Him cry aloud:

“Redeemer, give to my son release!”

THE KNIGHTS.

(pressing closer around AMFORTAS.)

Uncover the Grail! —

Do thou thine office!

Thy father commands it:—

Thou must—thou must!

AMFORTAS.

No!—No more!—Ha!

Dark shadows of death fall around me—

Once again shall I to the living return?

Mad are ye all!

Who shall compel me to live?

O, can ye not death to me give?

Behold it! —The open wound behold!

Reeking with poison: here flows my blood—

Unsheath your weapons! Bury your swords,

Deep—deep within—to the hilt—

Up! Ye Templars!

End for the sinner his woes and wail—

That once more the Radiance gleam from the Grail!

All have shrunk back from him. AMFORTAS, in fearful ecstasy, stands alone. PARSIFAL accompanied by GURNEMANZ and KUNDRI has appeared unnoticed and now comes forward, he stretches out the Spear and with its point touches AMFORTAS' side.

PARSIFAL.

One weapon only serves—

The wound shall close,

To the Spear that brought his woes.

AMFORTAS' visage is as in holy rapture: he appears to totter, deeply moved; GURNEMANZ supports him.

PARSIFAL.

Be whole, forgiven and absolv'd!—

By me thy office now be wrought!

O blessing on thy Sorrows,

That Mercy's marvel'd power,

And Wisdom's purest dower,

The timid Fool have brought!—

The Sacred Spear

I here to you restore!—

All look with highest rapture on the Spear which PARSIFAL holds high above him; gazing on its point PARSIFAL continues in great enthusiasm.

Oh mighty marvel's highest store!—

That I thy grievous wound could close,—

From which the Sacred Blood outflows,

And yearning seeks the fountain glowing,

There in the Grail for ever, ever flowing!

No longer hide the wondrous sign—

Unveil the Grail!—Open the Shrine!

The Esquires open the shrine. PARSIFAL takes from it the Holy Grail and at its sight sinks upon his knees in fervent prayer before it. The “Grail” glows in radiant light: its rapturous glory is shed upon all. TITUREL, his dying life for a moment renewed, raises himself up in his coffin, as if to bless those around him. From the dome descends a white Dove and hovers over PARSIFAL'S head. PARSIFAL gently savings the “Grail” to and fro before the kneeling Templars. KUNDRI with her gaze fixed upon him, sinks, expiring slowly, to the ground. AMFORTAS and GURNEMANZ kneel in homage before PARSIFAL. Voices are heard from the dome, scarcely audible:—

O Heavenly Mercy's Marvel—Redemption to the Redeemer!



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